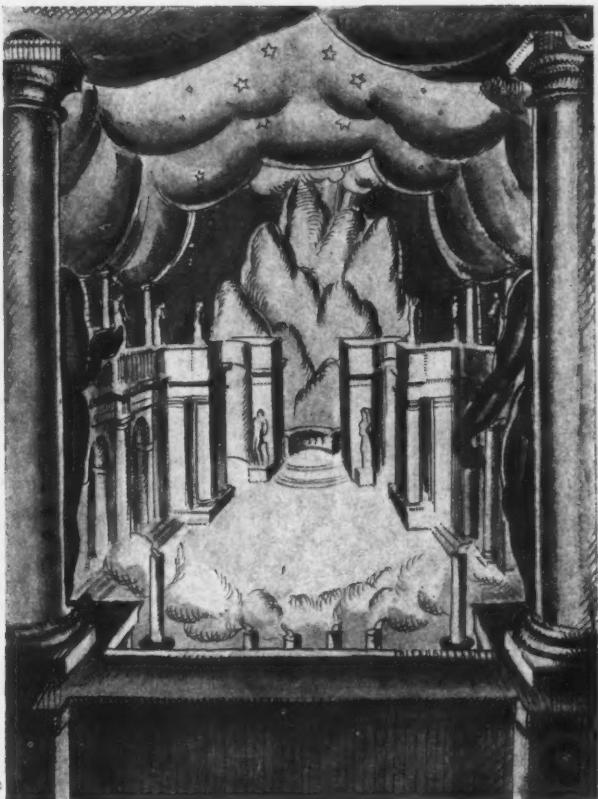


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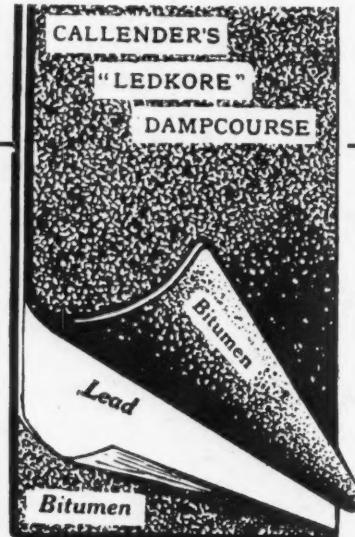
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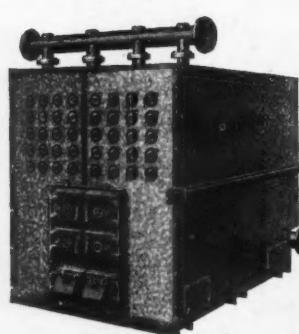
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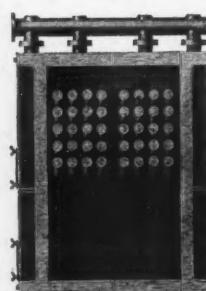
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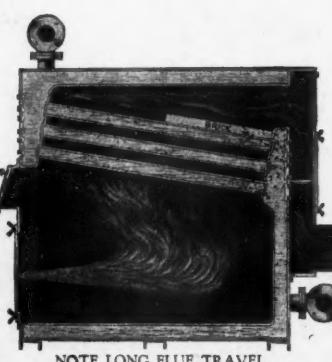
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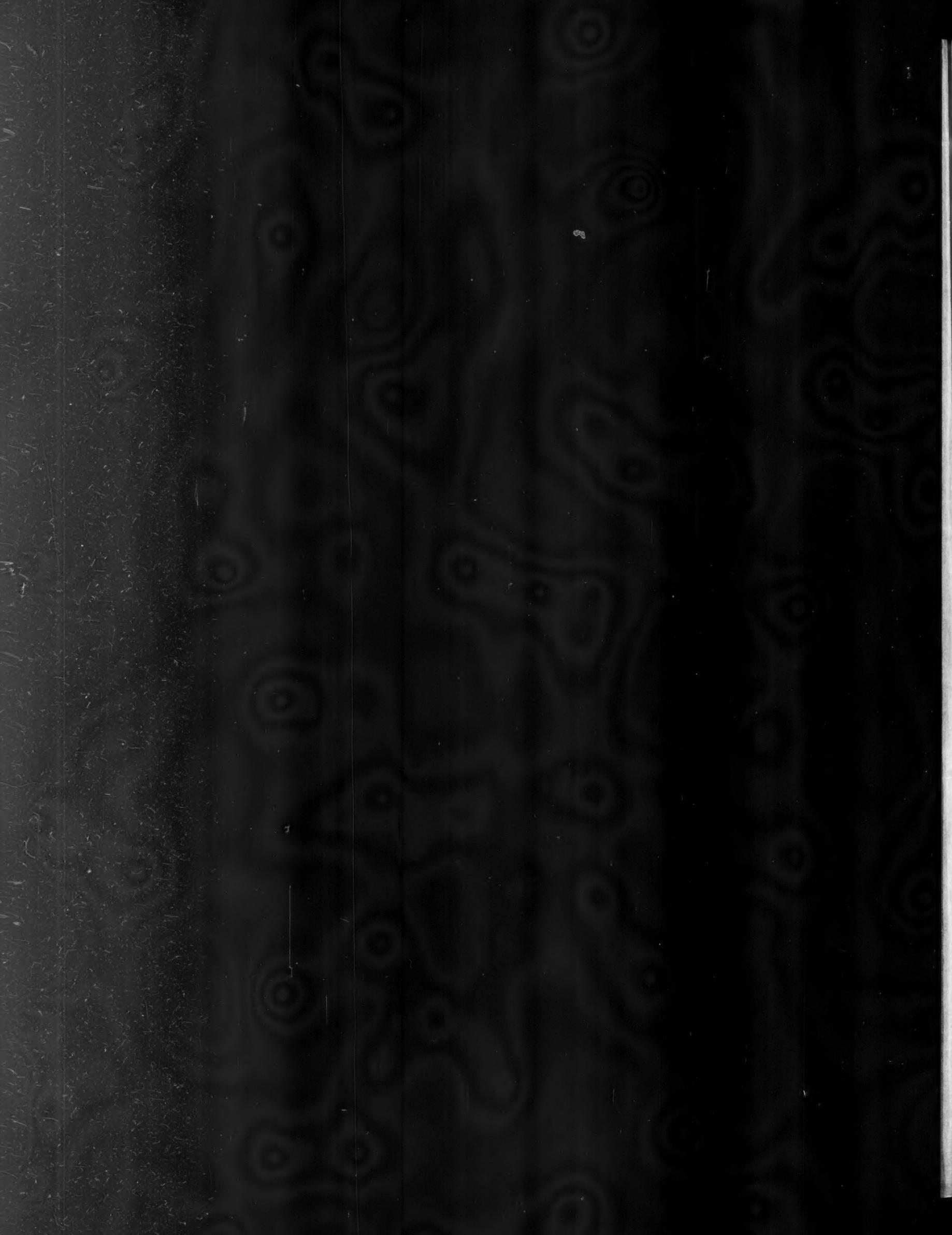
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# THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

*A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration*

Vol. LXXIII, No. 438

May 1933

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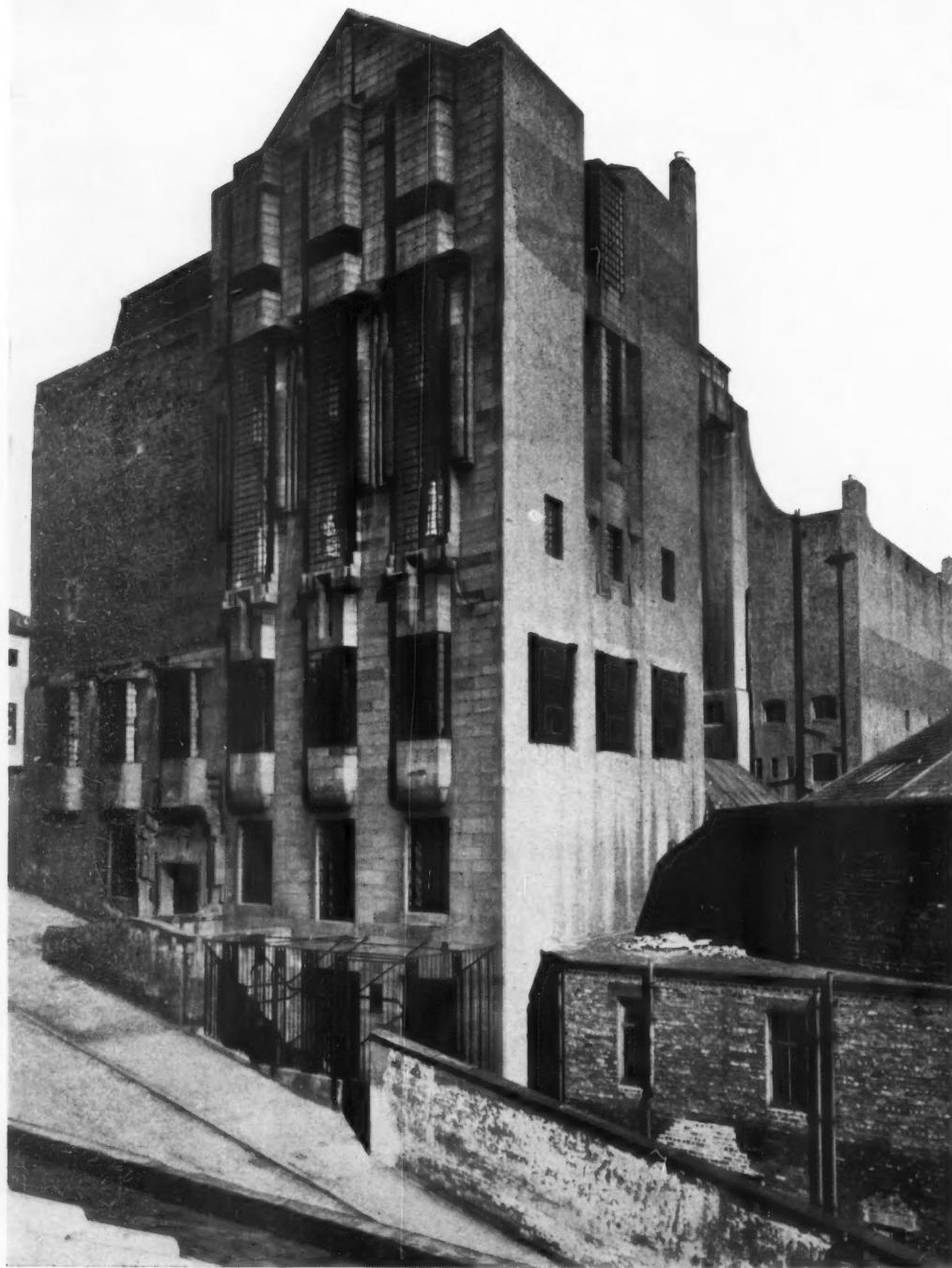
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• THE GLASGOW  
SCHOOL OF ART  
C. R. MACKINTOSH  
ARCHITECT 1894

PLATE i

May 1933

## CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH • 1869 - 1928

A memorial Exhibition of the Architectural Drawings, Plans, Sketches and Water-Colours of C. R. Mackintosh and of his wife, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, the interior decorator, is being held in the McLellan Galleries, Glasgow, from May 3rd to 27th. Everyone who can should visit so important an exhibition as this.

Mackintosh, unknown and ignored in England, has long been honoured in Scotland and in Europe. He has been called "the father of modern architecture;" a remark which is justified, if by being modern we mean the avoiding of unnecessary decoration and the using of structural lines as the dominant motif in a building. The Glasgow School of Art, his chief executed work, was erected in 1894. It shows, in the details of its ironwork, the influence of Javanese art which was popular at the time. This earned for the work of Mackintosh and other architects tinged with "Art Nouveau" the name of "the Spook School of Architects" among the robust "traditionalists" in England. Before the war, in Germany, however, the severe Scottish beauty of Mackintosh's work was appreciated and the excellent style of building which characterized the great revival of architecture over there was then known as "Mackintoshisms."

After the war Mackintosh could find so little work that he confined himself almost exclusively to water-colour painting. He died in 1928 and it is typical of the English estimate of this great man that his obituary notice in "The Times" measured less than three inches. His wife died a few months ago.

# The Middle-Class Slum

By W. J. TURNER

THE slums of London are a disgrace to every Englishman from the Prime Minister and the Archbishop of Canterbury down to myself. There is absolutely no excuse for not immediately devising and putting into action a programme of destroying and rebuilding that will abolish them within a period of seven years. There are thousands of unemployed men in the building trade, there are quantities of timber, metal, glass and all requisite materials lying about in heaps waiting to be used. That is to say labour and goods—the only real wealth—are in superabundance and idle. Why can't they be used? This is the question that everybody is asking and there is only one answer, an answer so utterly fatuous as to seem incredible, namely, that there is no money. But what is money? It is only another name for credit, and the credit of London is equal to the resources and real wealth of London. The more money spent on making London richer in all its material amenities, the greater London's credit. Nobody should allow this lie that there is no money to rebuild and improve the housing of London to pass muster any longer. It is an imposition on the meanest intelligence, and the building trade unions, the architects, the builders, and all those who could be busy destroying and rebuilding the slums of London should constantly press for its public reconditioning on a grand scale.

But the slums are a notorious and acknowledged foul sore festering in patches all over the tenth-rate capital of our British Empire. I call it tenth-rate because you cannot describe any piece of work as first-rate, whatever beauties it may possess, if it is disfigured by horrible blotches and patches. If, however, we disregard certain special architectural features; a few districts—such as The Mall, Belgravia, Bloomsbury, Regent's Park, the Adelphi—where there has been unity of planning on a large scale; some fine squares; and our splendid public gardens; we may describe the rest of London which houses the great majority of our professional and commercial population, as a vast middle-class slum.

It is an old and true saying that evil communications corrupt good manners; still more true is it that drab habitations depress the inhabitants, and so our middle-class slum-dwellers are saddened and devitalized by the dreadful dreariness of the places in which they live. The fact that they are so used to this dreariness that they are often not consciously aware of it, does not mitigate its deleterious effects. The vast majority of us Londoners live in what I call a middle-class slum, which in every respect but that of dirt and cubic area per person, is as bad as the worst tenement and often more dreary.

I have had a vast experience of seeking for a decent flat or small house in what are known as the more select parts

of London. I shall describe little by little the process of disillusionment, which is the process of getting used to the fact that a professional man, who is not rich, is compelled today in London to live in what I call a slum. My requirements are:—

- (1) A house or flat with two bedrooms, two living rooms (one large, i.e., not less than 20 ft. by 20 ft.), a kitchen and a bathroom.
- (2) The house must have a garden on which the sun shines either in the morning or the afternoon.
- (3) The flat must have either a roof garden or a wide balcony sufficient for four persons to sit in comfort, and have a meal in the open air.
- (4) The bathroom must receive all the morning sun, be equipped in the most up-to-date manner, also with a shower, and be large enough to hang a punching ball in for exercise if required.
- (5) Both bedrooms must receive the morning sun.
- (6) The large living-room must receive the sun in the afternoon or morning, preferably the former.
- (7) Electric cooking and electric heating in every room must be installed.
- (8) The outlook from the bedrooms and from the large living room must be upon trees and an open space.
- (9) The balcony and the garden must not be shut in by surrounding buildings.
- (10) Under present economic conditions the rent must not be more than £100 per annum.

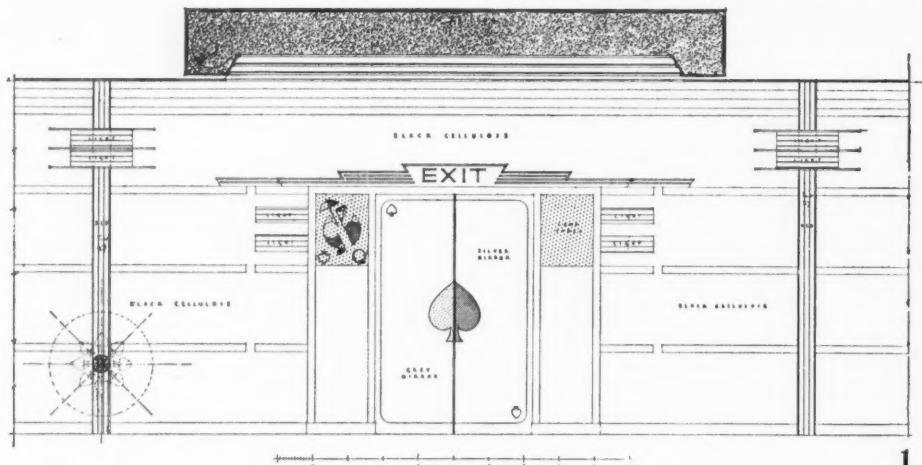
Now, I maintain that the requirements detailed above are the minimum for two civilized human beings living together. Anything less I call slum conditions.

But this is not all. I demand that my neighbours shall be at least as well off as myself and that there be a variety in the design of the buildings and the streets. Now all this is procurable without the slightest difficulty by municipal and national effort, aided by individual effort.

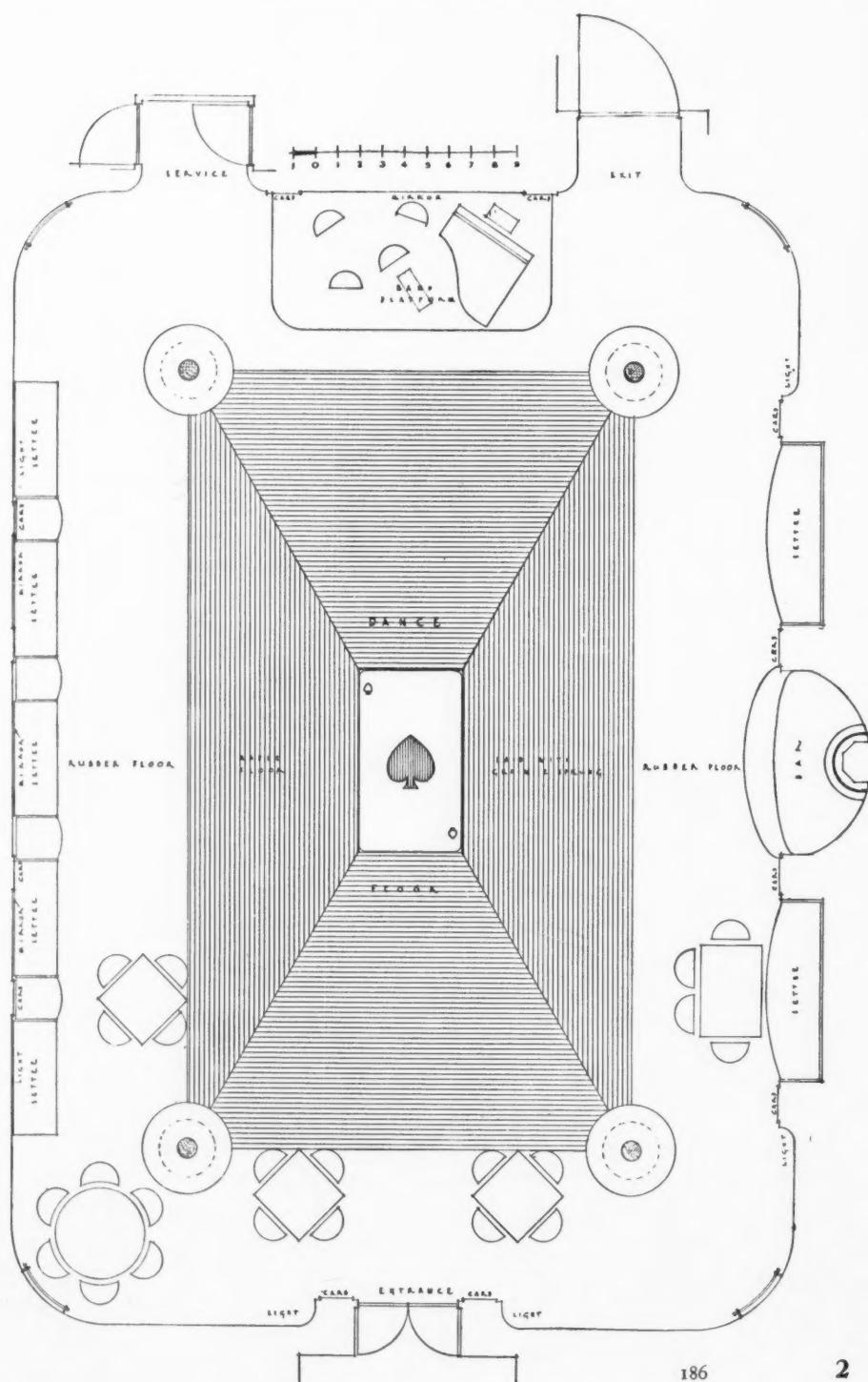
But can I get it as things are today? No, not if I pay even double the rent I have indicated. Instead of cheerful, well-designed small houses in charming squares, rhomboids, parallelograms or other regular or irregular geometrical patterns, I find large dreary barracks full of staircases and landings, or horrible gimcrack villas full of nooks and corners placed back to back, and painted brown instead of in gay colours.

As for flats, well, a pestilence ought to carry away the architects and builders responsible for the majority of them. What we want are new buildings of steel and glass, terraced, with flat roofs, designed compactly with the same gift for making the most of every inch of space as are our ships. And wherever there are houses or flats there should be trees and flowers somewhere visible, and somewhere an open view. Any district that has not got the amenities I have enumerated in every part—though it may be on a larger or smaller scale—is, in my opinion, a slum and unfit for human habitation in the year 1933.

# THE ACE OF SPADES CLUB



1



186



3

This club room is a recent addition to the Ace of Spades Café Restaurant on the Kingston By-pass at Surbiton. It is a private club and is not for use by the general public. The illustrations on these pages show :—

1. Cross section through the room showing the concealed lighting which is reflected from the silvered rough-finished higher ceiling. This lighting is arranged for dimming and the colours can be changed at will. The lower ceiling and walls are finished in black cellulose on laminated wood and the columns and circular discs, forming light boxes, are coloured sealing wax red. New versions of playing card designs form the motif for panel decoration round the room.

2. Plan of the room. The dance floor surround is covered with black rubber and the dance floor is laid "with the grain" in maple. The ace of spades is introduced as a central panel to the floor. The bar is finished in black cellulose with aluminium strips and peach mirror to the cabinet.

3. A view from the staircase through the entrance door showing the mirror lined doors, the highly polished black lower ceiling and the red column with its circular discs.

4. The room as reflected in the exit door; notice the curved light boxes and the mirror lining of the doors. Half of the door is covered with grey and the other half with silvered mirror. The shape of the ace is cut out in the silvering. The furniture throughout is sealing wax red and upholstered in beige colour.

5. One of the glazed openings from the club room to the existing restaurant. The old oak studding has been retained and lined on the room side with mirror. One of the new playing card designs is shown and on the left a portion of the bar.

2

B  
BY E. B. MUSMAN

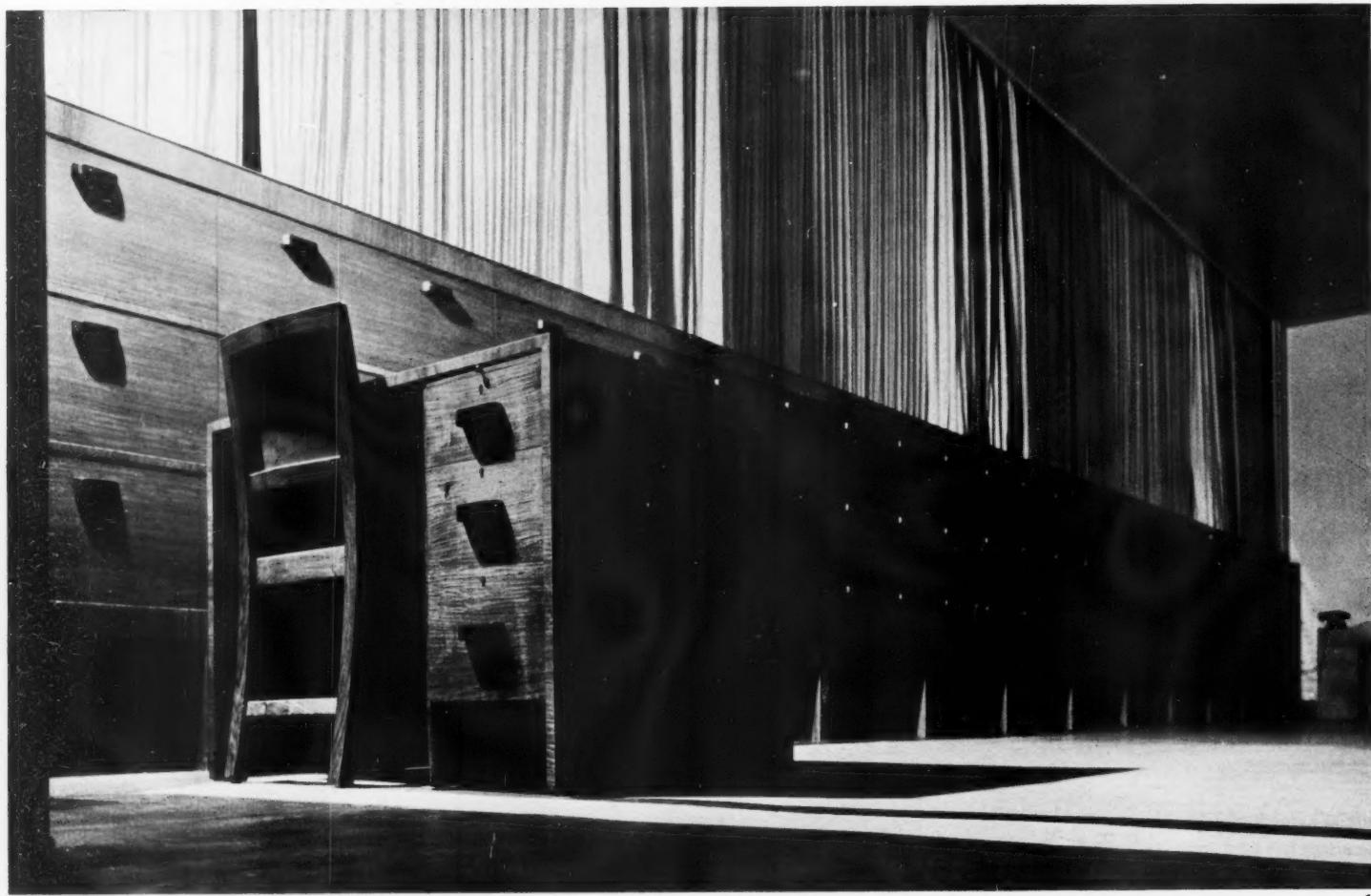


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5

# SILK SHOWROOMS FOR MESSRS



1

ARCHITECTS • STANLEY HALL & EASTON AND ROBERTSON

1. A close-up view of the principal fitting in the general sales room of new showrooms for Messrs. Stünzi in Market Place, London. The fittings and furniture are in straight grained walnut veneer and have handles of macassar. Fine textured net curtains screen the windows and outer curtains of a deeper tone of ivory are placed in front of the unsymmetrically placed piers.

# STÜNZI

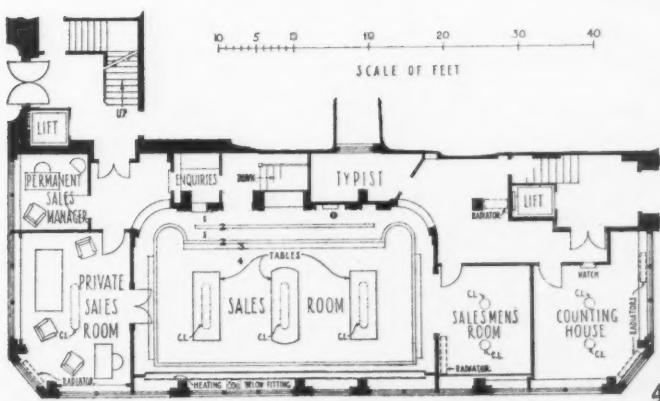


2



3

2. From the corner of the general sales room, looking towards the window of the private sales room. The rubber floor in the former is grey with bands of beige pink, black and blue green. The light fittings are cellulosed to match the colour of the ceiling. 3. A view from the private sales room to the general sales room. The walls in this room are stippled a pale fawn, and the ceiling is somewhat lighter in hue. The stools and chairs are covered with ochre coloured morocco.  
 4. Plan of the ground floor.



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# THE NEW ITALIAN



# N LINER BY GUSTAVE PULITZER



3



4

One month later than the *Rex* the *Conte di Savoia* left Genoa to cross the Atlantic for the first time. Placed on the wharf in October, 1930, and launched on October 28, 1931, her maiden voyage was started on November 30, 1932. The vessel was built at the San Marco Dockyard of Trieste.

The 129,000 H.P. engines give the ship a gross registered tonnage of 50,000 tons and a speed which, in the official trials, reached an average of 29.4 knots: this is more than is required to cross from Genoa to New York in six and a half days. A stabilising plant composed of three "Sperry" gyroscopes, each weighing approximately 175 tons, stabilises the vessel, thus eliminating rolling even in the roughest seas.

Illustrations 1 and 2 are views of the lounge on the social deck, in which the brightness of the radica wood, which is inlaid in the pillars, walls, and beams of the ceiling, predominates. The opening verses of the *Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne* are inscribed on the silver band running round the planetarium, the ceiling of which is decorated in gold and silver leaves. The walls are covered in brownish leather and the columns are finished with opaque zinc. 3 and 4. The entrance hall on "C" Deck. Indirect lighting runs along the soft yellow of the walls, radiates from the ceiling of rounded inlay, and is released from the bronze and crystal pillars. Two geographical charts are placed on one of the walls, 4, to indicate the respective daily positions of the *Rex* and *Conte di Savoia*.

# THE NEW ITALIAN LINER

5. The Princess Gallery is on the social deck adjoining the lounge. The gallery has been named after the ship's Sponsor, H.R.H. the Crown Princess of Italy, whose torso was modelled by Maryla Lednicka. Along the gallery are tall mirrors alternating with show-windows. The columns are covered with bronze, worked in fine seams, and the walls have been decorated by Giulio Rosso. Divans are arranged in the niches. The lamps are of brass. 6. The swimming pool on the sun deck.

An illustration of the main staircase is given on page 218.



5



6

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# Masks and Monuments

By  
J. L. MARTIN  
and  
E. SARMIENTO



## of the Spanish Baroque

THE period of something over a hundred years that stretches between the opening of the seventeenth century—perhaps the century of European history most compact with intellectual activity and maturity of thought—and closes with the growth of academic taste and French influence in Spain during the 'thirties and 'forties of the eighteenth century, encloses the early development (though not the first beginnings) and the growth and decadence of the Baroque style in Spain in all the arts, architecture, sculpture, painting and literature, perhaps not excepting even music. An art-style which dominates so entirely the arts properly so-called, cannot have failed to penetrate manners; this article is intended to present three examples of the Baroque Spectacle in Spain, displays in which all the arts combine to adorn a social occasion, the essence possibly of the "festival show" as Fanshawe termed the first of those we describe below.

It is important to bear in mind that these shows were conceived as opportunities for elaborate artistic expression, and received the care and thought of the best talent available, which is more than even the Theatre receives from us—and we must not forget that in the seventeenth century in Spain and Italy, the Theatre (as a spectacle) was still a temporary occasion.

The first of these festivals is the birthday of King Philip IV, in 1622, when his wife presented him a play, *La Gloria de Niquea*, written by the Conde de Villamediana specially for the occasion; specially in a double sense, for he was generally thought to be the lover of the Queen. This play, preceded by a mask in which the ladies of the Court took part, was given at Aranjuez, since the reign of Philip II a favourite resort of the Court, and the praise of poets and writers throughout the seventeenth century.

In 1623, Hurtado de Mendoza published his account of these feasts of the preceding year, and nearly fifty years later, Sir Richard Fanshawe, one of the seventeenth century

English diplomats whose travels abroad so often resulted in entertaining narratives written when age forbade further voyages, translated it. After faithfully translating Mendoza's idealized description of the place, Fanshawe goes on to transmit to his readers the following lively description of the event. (These extracts are taken from Fanshawe's *Feasts of Aranwez*, London, 1670).

Another's command (not my presumption) embarks me in this Narrative, though not witty, yet true, and now I write it with jealousy that I shall wrong the story; but nothing can set it forth like a punctual telling it.

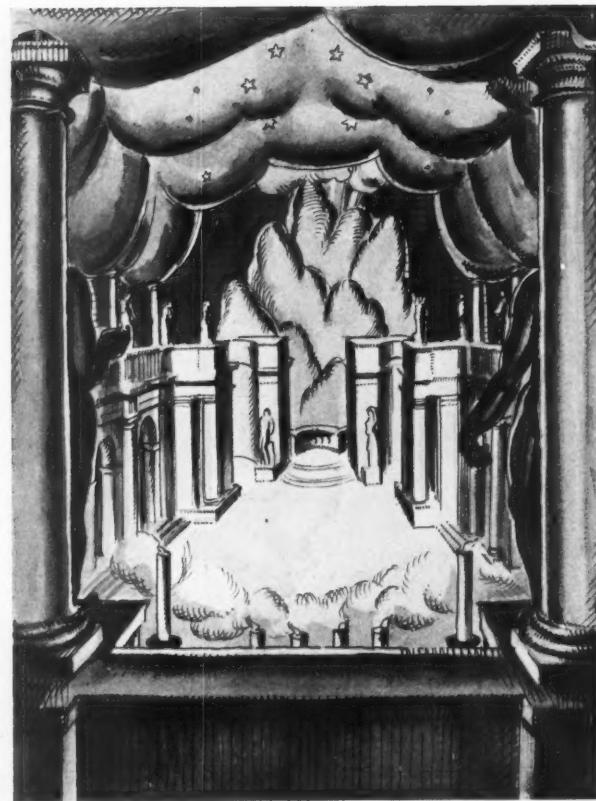
He proceeds with the punctual telling (and Fanshawe with a not less punctual translating) deplored "the poverty of words to describe the brave cloaths" and finally continuing:

### The Fabrick of the Scenes.

To erect the scenes for the Opera of her Majesty, came to Aranwez Captain Julius Cesar Fontana, chief engineer and superintendant of the Fortifications of the Kingdom of Naples, son to that so celebrated Architect of the Fabricks of Sextus Quintus, and Artificer comparable with his Father. There was raised a Theatre of 150 foot long and 78 in breadth, and seven Arches on each side with Pilasters, Cornishes and Battlements, of Dorick Work, and on the tops of those certain Galleries with Balusters of Gold, Silver, and Blew, which compassed the whole, and the same susteined seventy massive candlesticks holding white wax torches and Tapers innumerable, with certain pillars emboss'd at the corners of them Ten Foot high, upon which was fasten'd a Canopy in imitation of a clear Night, when a multitude of stars break out of a gloomy shadow, and upon the stage, two Figures of a large proportion which served for imaginary Gyants; and to correspond with the Frontispiece, and the cornishes of the open galleries, many statues of brass, and pendant from the arches, certain globes of crystal, which made great lights; and round about benches. . . . There was formed a mountain, of fifty foot broad and eighty in circumference, which was made to split itself in two, and though it was so vast in bulk, yet one man moved it with much ease. It covered the scene, and was of the same Dorick Work, and had an ascent by many steps to a spacious cave, peopled with many wild beasts. What this mountain hid shall be revealed when we speak of the scenes as they served in their proper places of the Mask. . . .

### The Mascarade.

The first couple that sallied, Dancing, was the ladies Sophia and Luisa Benavides, in Hungartins of cloth of Silver, clingant with Azure, the seams laid thick with Passemans of Silver, and two pair of wings, and kirtles of the same stuff, the same passemans covering all the ground,



A sketch reconstructing the Theatre as Mendoza describes it.

sleeves of cloth of silver cut upon azure, cloth of silver mantles hanging on their shoulders by three roses of diamonds, many jewels and flowers in their head-dresses, Pyramids in a mountain of plumes of both colours, black masks and white torches.

\* \* \*

These enterings were most sprightly . . . They ended the mascarade, and in the same Habits, accompanied by the Major-domo's and Mothers of the Maids, or Duenia's, sate themselves down upon their respective strado's.

Here follows a description of the next parts of the pageant, they were : a Chariot of the river Tagus, a Chariot of April, the Flight of the Eagle, the Comedy itself ; the dresses of all the participants in these shows are described in the same way as those mentioned above.

At a point in the proceedings the mountain, which had done duty as a wild background, changed its aspect and became a courtly garden :—

All of a sudden the Mountain cover'd the whole face of the Theatre, and presently that bulk open'd itself at the sounding of instruments, when with unexpected novelty, that which was a mountain and a building, we saw turn'd into most beautiful gardens of flowers, and natural Fountains, so ingeniously, and with so great quicknesse metamorphosed, that though the artifice was much, the brevity was the thing admired.

These Mountains were a favourite device of the age.

Hurtado de Mendoza's narrative and also Fanshawe's translation contain a second account in verse of the whole affair, reporting the fire which, towards the end of the play, broke out over the wonderful stage :

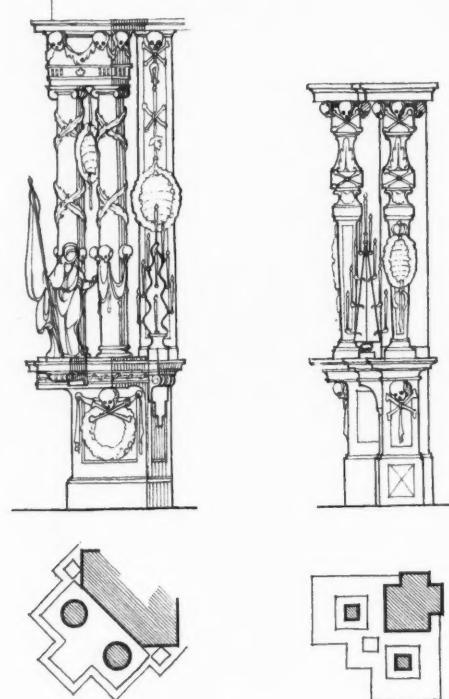
And Elenia in softest concepts breathes her soul's sadness into the sweetness of a sonnet, and she finds sirens on dry land sooner than in the sea : but what is this ? for all the apparatus now is 'neath the jurisdiction of fierce fire, swift flame darting from one dry branch to another is a panache all made of light, and the rooves fly forth on burning plumes.

So says the original verse ; forbearing (if only for fear

of the censor) to add, what all scandalously believed, that Villamediana had set fire to the "apparatus" on purpose, for he dashed to the *estrado*, seized the Queen and carried her off to the riverside to safety in his arms ; he was assassinated three months later in Madrid, some think by order of jealous Philip himself.

#### CHURRIGUERA'S CATAFALQUE FOR THE FUNERAL OF MARÍA LUISA DE ORLEANS, 1689

In 1689, Charles II, the last unhappy descendant of the Spanish Hapsburgs was widowed by the death of Queen María Luisa. Charles himself died in 1700, at the age



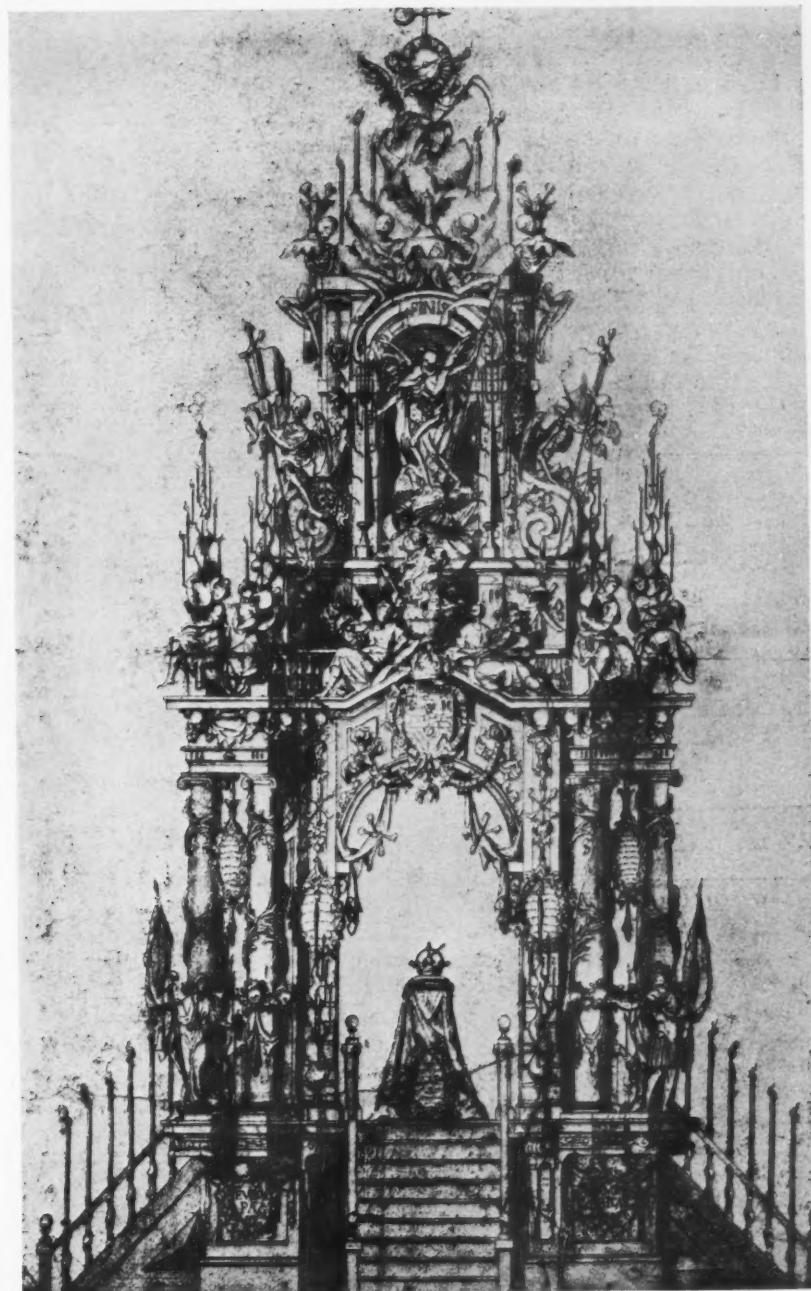
A comparison of the angle treatment in Churriguera's schemes for the Catafalque.

of 39, without issue, leaving the Spanish throne to Philip V, the first of the Bourbon dynasty, so bringing Spain eventually much under the influence of French taste for well nigh a century. However, even thirty years was not sufficient to submerge Spanish feeling completely, for as we shall see in our next example, 1732 found Toledo celebrating what was perhaps the climax of the Spanish Baroque, in interior application at least, the famous *Transparente* in the Cathedral.

For the funeral ceremonies of Queen María Luisa, ten architects were invited to submit designs for a catafalque "of such magnificence that the Queen might retain distinction even in death."

The whole event was written up in the most minute detail by Juan de Vera Tassis y Villaroel, who tells us that of the designs submitted in competition, that chosen was Churriguera's. Churriguera, who died in 1725, is the outstanding architect of the latest phase of Spanish Baroque, and was at this time, at the height of his career.

There exist today two drawings of the catafalque, one given by Schubert in his *Geschichte des Barock in Spanien*



Churriguera's design of the Catafalque for the funeral of María Luisa de Orleans, which is believed to be the original scheme submitted by him for the competition. This drawing was illustrated, in 1908, by Schubert in *Geschichte des Barock in Spanien*. A drawing of Churri-guera's modified design, as it was actually built, is illustrated on Plate vi.

PLATE ii

May 1933



(1908), without any mention of its origin, the other is an engraving given in Juan de Vera Tassis' *Noticias historiales* of 1690, already referred to. See plates ii and vi.

The two designs vary considerably. The most important difference is in size, and accounts for the other discrepancies between the two drawings, or at least the greater part of them. Vera Tassis tells us that Churriguera's original design would not fit into the church at first selected for the ceremony (San Jerónimo, the "Westminster Abbey" of Madrid, as San Francisco el Grande is its "St. Paul's"), and that for this and other reasons, it was decided to hold the ceremony in the Chapel of the Augustinian nuns, who were anxious to have the honour moreover. It seems likely, therefore, that Schubert's reproduction is Churriguera's design as submitted for the competition, while the engraving in Tassis' book is certainly the design erected. The two are sufficiently alike for one to be a modification of the other. The smaller design has been reduced especially in diagonal width and height, the latter by the elimination of the pedestal course to the upper feature, and by reducing its massing. In addition, Churriguera's opulence of symbolism has suffered greatly, principally, of course, for lack of space. With regard to the diagonal width, the reduction is effected in the following ways: the figure which stands between and in front of the angle columns of the first scheme must have increased the octagonal plan almost to the full square, the second scheme replaces this by a re-entrant angle (see the diagrams); the placing of the columns in the second design also economizes width. This demands, naturally, some at least of the reduction in height—necessary for its position in the Chapel, as the engraving shows—and will account further for the change in the order of the columns from Ionic to an elaborate pilaster which no longer has any fixed height-width relation.

Another reason for the comparative lack of ornamentation, at least of ornamentation not of a somewhat conventional type, to be found in the second design, may be sought for in the short time in which it was put up, three weeks. There can be no doubt that Churriguera's first scheme has suffered from all these exacting limitations, which have had the effect of depriving it of some at least of its genuine Baroque character, for while the grouping and the centring remain more or less identical, the absence of all the decorative elements originally included, and the predominance of angular shapes in the second as against the curvilinear flow of the first, remove the binding ties which give the original design that character of relationship essential to the Baroque.

The two main themes of the work, eulogy of the deceased and the universal fate of death remain; this literary content of the work of art being emphasized, especially the deathly aspect, by the partial destruction of the unity of the work as a whole, and the consequent isolation and particularization of these component parts. The elements of eulogy that are retained are: the cartouches with inscriptions, the heraldic device, at the top, and above it again, a crowned lily over the globe. From this point we may work down to the base again, enumerating the principal elements of death: personified Death himself breaking the lily, the four skeletons that support the shield and crown, the clock indicating the hour of death, the hour-glass and the innumerable skulls, crossbones and shrouds that are suspended from every point. This division of the decorative elements into eulogy and death affords us a simple way of



The drawing reproduced as a title piece on page 193, and the above, are two of the designs used as wall decorations to accompany Churriguera's Catafalque.

indicating the colour-scheme of the catafalque: the bulk of the (supposed) masonry was painted to imitate black marble, the important mouldings were white, the eulogistic motifs were gilt, while the death motifs were silver, except possibly the clock and its support. The funereal torches, as the rubrics require, were beeswax, their holders yellow, to the number of 800. These brilliant lighting effects (an essential part of the theatrical nature of the Baroque), were distributed over the walls of the church, as well as placed upon the catafalque itself. The drawing reproduced from Tassis, to use his own words, "can give no conception of the grandiose effect of the whole scene: neither the quill nor the burin can perfectly portray its majestic grandeur and beauty, for such will ever appear the dead copy of a living model."

The living model was set at the domed crossing before the high altar of the chapel, covered by a canopy suspended from the dome, and approached from the end of the church between walls specially draped for the occasion in *ricos y lugubres paños*, rich and mournful cloths, actually, blue and black velvets and damasks, much braided and fringed with gold. Upon these hangings were suspended cartouches alternately bearing coats of arms (including the Royal Arms of England, to which of course, the late Queen was entitled), and Emblems in the fashion of the day. Vera Tassis, who himself composed the Emblems, is careful to define all the varying distinctions between hieroglyphs, emblems and the like, but the essential quality common to all is that they contain a design simply and ingeniously representing some general notion, such as, in this case, the loss sustained by the whole nation, the incomparable virtue of the Queen, and

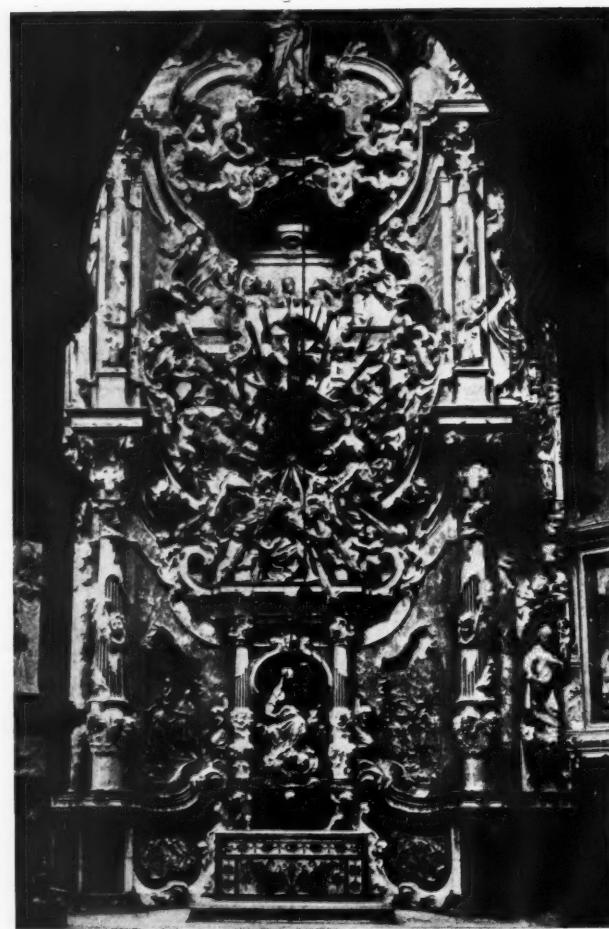
so on. These series of cartouches were garlanded with drapery and skulls. Tassis tells us that all this sumptuous decoration overflowed out into the courtyard (where the hangings were mauve), and were repeated upon the stone façade of the convent that fronted the street, for here were hung blue and black damasks and velvets bearing the royal arms. In the last part of his description, Tassis treats us to the minute enumeration of all the nobles and grandes who attended the ceremony in state on Tuesday, March 22, 1689, and following day: it is not without its pathos to observe the same family names appearing twice and more in these columns as are enumerated also in the Mask that was performed at Aranjuez, recorded by Mendoza. Spain had decayed from within how much during those seventy years, and had still a century of humiliation and decadence before it, whilst its kings and noble families amused themselves in unending ceremonial!

THE TRANSPARENTE IN TOLEDO CATHEDRAL,  
1732

Francisco Xavier de Castañeda, in one of the two accounts of the Transparente we still have, *Relación de los solemnes aparatos etc.* (no date, but the *Aprobación* is granted August, 1732), gives us an elaborate narrative of the origin and description of the structure of the Transparente. According to Castañeda, and in more direct and simple style, to his Censor, Fray Juan Antonio González de Frías, when the Cardinal Primate of Spain, Archbishop Astorga, first came to Toledo, he observed the grave defect of the high altar tabernacle, which, of course was, that on walking behind the sanctuary, in the ambulatory, one was behind the reserved Sacrament, without there being any indication of its proximity. Determining to have an aperture pierced through the wall, Cardinal Astorga gave Narciso Tomé the task of designing the work. He did so, and ten years later, in 1732, the *sólido magnífico Transparente* was completed, taking the place of the Escorial as the Spanish "eighth marvel" in the estimation of the times. There can be no doubt that this amazing construction represents the culminating point of the whole of Baroque Architecture, in Spain certainly, if not in the whole of Europe, at least in ingenuity of solution to a problem of interior decoration.

Narciso Tomé is to be thought of not only as an architect, but also as a painter and sculptor; in the Transparente he is seen working in all three media, and handling their respective materials with consummate skill: he here exploits perspective device and the possibilities of classical distortion in the interests of dramatic climax.

The Transparente is an interior "façade," standing back to back with the reredos of the high altar. The whole composition centres about an aperture opening on to a passage or interior chamber which is the tabernacle strictly so-called, the glass facing of the aperture being the *Transparente*. The wall of this chamber opposite to the Transparente occupies the central panel of the reredos behind the high altar, the whole thing is Tomé's work. The cross-sectional diagram explains the construction and shows the sight-line. The purpose of the "machine" is to enable the Blessed Sacrament to be seen when placed within the tabernacle-chamber; actually very little can be seen, but the Transparente will hardly be thought to fail in its purpose of drawing the attention of the casual passer-by to the presence of the reserved Sacrament. The idea seems to be



The Transparente in Toledo Cathedral. Reproduced from Schubert's *Geschichte des Barock*.

a development of the *viril* or round, glass-faced tabernacle in the reredoses of Aragonese cathedrals and large churches. (Apart, that is, from the general development of eucharistic worship as a feature of the Counter-Reform.) The composition, therefore, is built around a line of vision, and it is its principal functional aim to force the eye upon a single point, a practice which is in any case the universal aim of the Baroque façade. It achieves this by the stress of perspective effect, having the additional incidental effect of producing a sensation of extreme depth within very small compass. Without distortion of the classical forms, or at best a kind of architectural painting, it is hard to imagine how this effect could have been produced. The vertical lines of the columns at either side mark the lateral limit of the design: between these lines the general face of the structure is hollowed or recessed, and this recession is exaggerated, at least to the eye, by the false perspective lines of the two sets of cornice mouldings, which are drawn downwards to an imaginary vanishing-point. This feat in itself demands a careful handling of all the lines: lines which would have been horizontal (could the effect as we experience it have been "built correctly" at all, that is, produced by normal conventional practice alone) are here built already placed in their own perspective as it were, thus producing to the beholder from the ambulatory a doubled perspective effect, the actual, visual, and the preconceived built perspectives. Had Tomé built the cornices with the

normal horizontal line, instead of forcing them into their own line of perspective (in relation to the eye viewing it from below), the result would have been, apart from reducing the *impression* of perspective, to destroy the value and object of the composition as a whole, by the interruption of the cornice lines meeting within the circle of the aperture, so, too, immensely reducing their dramatic value as a support for the presence of the Blessed Sacrament behind the glass-covered circle. All the corresponding lines in the entire composition have been adroitly adjusted to agree with the artificial vanishing-point of this main cornice, whether they are above or below the eye-level. A difficult feat, but Tomé has succeeded to such an extent that the centre of interest is made clear and the illusion of depth and distance is in every way convincing.

These main lines of the structure fall in with the centripetal movement about the aperture. The centre is stressed in two ways: by this architectural treatment which emphasizes its position by the direction of the main lines, moving inwards, and by the sculptural treatment which works outwards, complex at the centre, and simplified and plainer towards the extremities, dwindling to shreds of cloud caught on to the limiting columns. The sculptural imagery concentrates upon the circle of angels who are cut through by sharp shafts of light proceeding from a sun whose centre is that of the aperture. Above this is a large-scale representation of the Last Supper, above which again float miraculously, clouds, fragments of architecture, and cherubim, rounding off the composition.

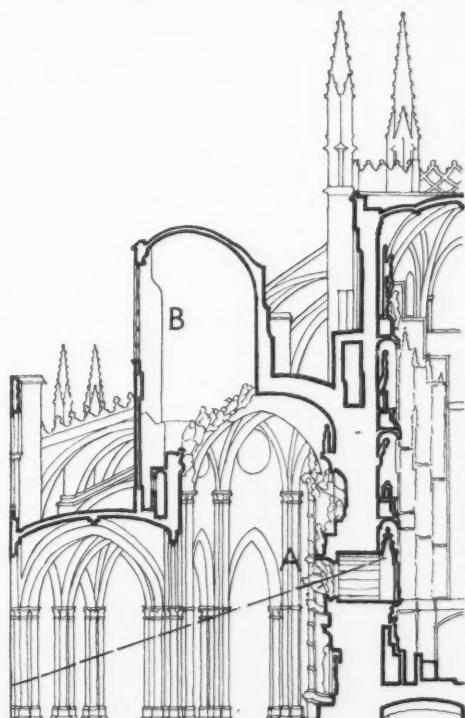
The general effect is magnified many times by the use of polychromatic marbling, and by the violent contrasts of light and shade produced by a kind of spotlight obtained from a source invisible to the spectator of the whole. This source is a circular opening in the web of the vault opposite to the *Transparente* itself. Through this opening enters light from a dormer built above the roof, and audaciously posed upon the thin Gothic vault. Even this purely utilitarian piece of construction does not escape symbolic treatment, despite the fact that it can only be seen with one's back to the *Transparente* altar table: for internally it is frescoed with celestial scenes, and a group of angels and clouds about the opening, frames it.

The appearance of the cathedral on the day of inauguration must have been, if tawdry, not less enchanting than a transformation scene. Castañeda, in a fireworks prose that continually pops with conceits, and is positively stiff with encrusted imagery, takes the chapels in order, from the Mozárabe to the San Ildefonso in the apse, and down the gospel side of the church to the Haro chantry again, describing their appearance, and comparing them in order, with the signs of the zodiac ("a heaven through which the Sun of

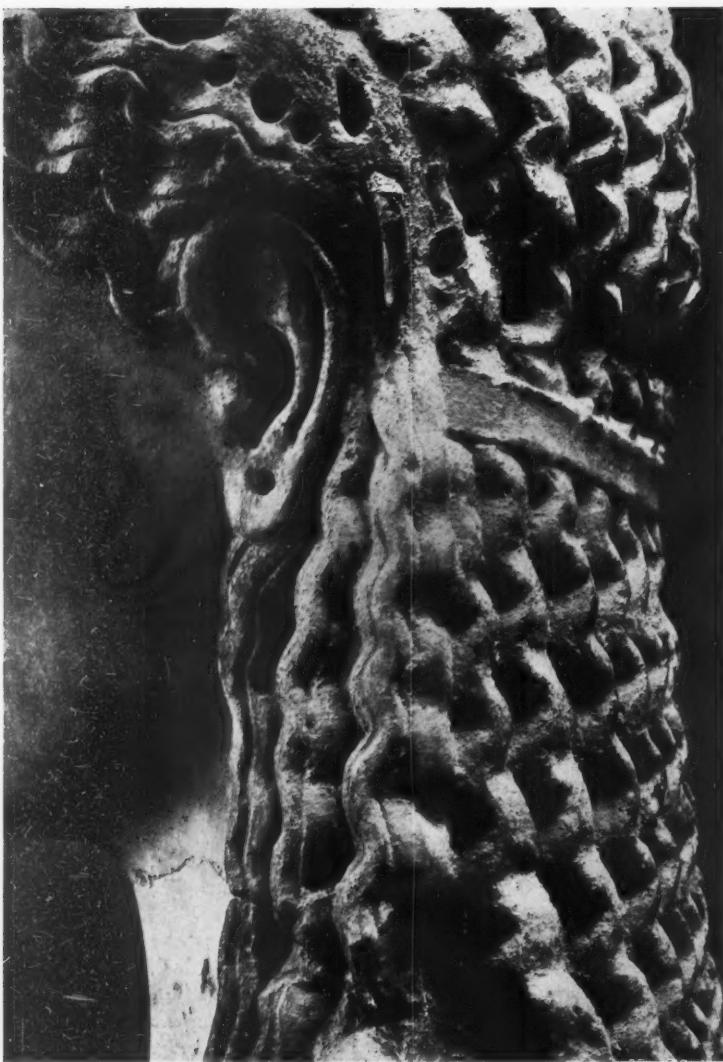
Justice was to proceed" in the Eucharistic Procession) a fancy which has an interesting counterpart in our own language in Francis Thompson's *Orient Ode*.

It is not possible here to quote in full. Perhaps the great gusto with which the writer refers to the display of plate—"the sacred vessels seemed gifted with bilocation, so great was their number," or the description of the tableau set up in the San Ildefonso chapel, will amuse us most. The latter was a representation, in the Spanish draped-image manner, of the bestowal by the Blessed Virgin of the chasuble upon St. Ildephonsus, who was archbishop of Toledo in the seventh century. This phrase too, attracts us, from the description of the decorations of the chapel of Santiago to the right (the gospel side) of the apse; the section of the clergy responsible for this chapel had it hung with canvases from the artistic store of the Chapter (it is one of the largest of the side-chapels, and its adornment must have been something of a problem, for it is too spacious to make any single item a centre of attraction) and among the pictures, says Castañeda, were to be seen "the strange and lovely colourings that Dominic the Greek made use of," though which of El Greco's paintings were chosen for this display, Castañeda does not specify. An exhibition of art to celebrate the final ecstatic circling of the Baroque before it dissolved away into disconnected rococo whirls and drops, or separated out into the flat severity of the academically classic—represented here in Toledo Cathedral by the Puerta Llana of 1800—seems something of an anticipation, and more original than we expect from even the Baroque; perhaps the first art exhibition of modern times.

We must not forget, though it is impossible to describe more now, that sacred oratory and music within the cathedral, and displays, tableaux, fireworks and the like, without, were all part of these festivities; Castañeda gives us the text of a cantata that was sung. (Bach and Handel were in their prime at this date; the first full-sized Oratorio was produced in London this same year. Although in its developed form, the Oratorio is more a style of the Protestant North, where ritual lent itself to elaboration only in the realm of musical interpretation, this form and the music of J. S. Bach especially, may justly be included among the major manifestations of the Baroque.) Of the two special sermons arranged for this occasion, Castañeda tells us that one, owing to the sudden illness of the Orator, was never preached, and the other was withheld from the Press by its retiring author. Modesty seems to have been an especial quality of the Baroque artists: perhaps the exuberance and splendour of their art sufficiently compensated them for the lack of any personal display. But, as for sermons for this end of the Baroque period, we have plenty—to go no further, that preached for María Luisa, and printed by Vera Tassis.



A diagram showing the position of the *Transparente* (A), and its floodlight (B).



1



2

## THE METHODS AND TOOLS OF THE GREEK SCULPTOR

A PIECE of sculpture is the creation of an individual artist in a particular material, with a particular tool. Of this fact Mr. Casson reminds us,\* and mildly suggests that "to look at Greek sculpture from the purely historical point of view" is "to leave the artist out in the cold"; whereas, "by a close study of the methods used by the artist from start to finish, the observer can in the end appreciate more deeply the aim of the sculptor himself." This is true. It is strange for how long we have been satisfied with "the purely historical point of view." We need be so no longer; for here we have an account both of the efficient and of the material cause in early Greek sculpture.

Mr. Casson tells the history of the fashions in tools and methods. In doing so, he provides new evidence for dating and for grouping works. More valuable than this, he tells of all the tools used by the Greek workers in bronze and stone. He describes their appearance, how they were handled, the uses to which they could be put, their relation to different materials, the characteristics of the marks each left and the works upon which these marks can best be observed. Here is a service not only to those who would learn of Greek sculpture, but to those who would learn of any sculpture. It is a clear account, and solid and sound; for Mr. Casson has not only drawn his inferences from the

\* TECHNIQUE OF EARLY GREEK SCULPTURE. By Stanley Casson. London: Oxford University Press. Price 25/- net.

widest observation, but has supported his conclusions by consulting living sculptors and by personal experiment. The photographs with which the text is illustrated are relevant and finely produced.

It comes as a surprise to learn what a number of tools the Greek sculptor in stone had at his disposal, and what a number of methods and tools he had for doing the same thing. In the preliminary work of blocking-out the artist was confined to a few tools. In the final processes he had a variety of them. A groove could be cut with a gouge. It could be chiselled with a bull-nosed chisel. It could be roughed with a drill, and then chiselled, or roughed with a chisel, and then abraded. It could be rubbed with an abrasive. Figures 3 and 4 show delicate grooves in drapery, 5 deep grooves dividing the toes, achieved by abrasion. Small deep depressions could be drilled or could be gouged. So, in 1 the arches under the locks of hair are gouged, in 3 the drapery is undercut by a drill. Again, in 1 the ear is pierced by a drill. The final surface of the statue could be left rough from the punch or chisel, or rubbed smooth, or abraded with a rasp. This variety of technique is true of hard stone.

In soft stone-work the methods of the wood carver and the uses of his tools, the knife and chisel, are predominant. "Proteus," 2, or "Bluebeard," is an early representative of this technique.



3



4



5

## EK SCULPTOR

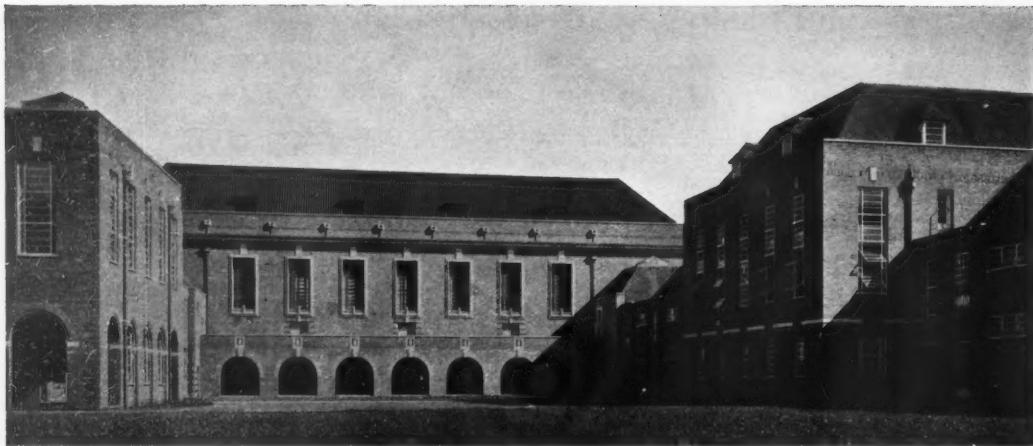
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There is an illuminating chapter on bronze-work. Mr. Casson makes it clear that the method of bronze-casting invented in the sixth century was not the *cire perdue* method in which the finished statue is a reproduction of a plastic original. Greek bronzes were reproductions of wooden originals. To understand them, it is necessary to understand not the modeller's, but the carver's technique.

Mr. Casson is concerned with the connection between style and technique. The meaning of technique he makes clear; but what of style? To make sense of Mr. Casson's oracular and spasmodic, though stimulating, utterances on style and technique, it is necessary to assume boldly that he is talking of form, not of style. He asks whether "style" is subordinated to technique, or technique to "style." His conclusion appears to be that, on the whole, "style" governs technique in this period of Greek art.

How difficult it usually is to tie technique to "style" or form is demonstrated by Mr. Eric Gill's remark, quoted in an appendix: "It is what you are thinking about while you do it that matters." Thus it is possible to use the punch, the tool for solidity, and make a flat-looking statue. It is curious that in this period of Greek art artists seem usually not only to produce the effects they intend but to produce them by the technical methods most suited to their purpose.

JOAN FLETCHER



#### THE NEW MERCHANT TAYLORS' SCHOOL

*Top.*—In the main quad, looking towards the great hall. In the foreground on the left is the Masters' common room and museum block, and on the right the examination hall and library block. The surrounds of the great hall windows are of artificial stone, and in the middle of the sills are ornamental vase silhouettes against the windows. The stone key blocks above the windows are carved in flat relief. *Centre.*—The north face of the north wing, showing the back of the museum block, also the music room at the top and the general window system of the corridors. In the sunlight is a corner of the great hall and part of the wing containing offices and quarters for resident bachelor masters.

*Bottom.*—The south face of a classroom wing. The solid piers, or bastions, occur at the masters' end of the classroom, and each has a small window, with shutters which are painted green over silver. The whole length of wall space between the bastions is taken up with steel windows, giving at least the necessary  $\frac{1}{4}$ th glass area. The brickwork above and below the ground floor windows is laid with each alternate course recessed  $\frac{1}{2}$  in., carrying the horizontal feeling between the vertical stops of the bastions.



The main group of buildings from the south-west, with the headmaster's house at the south-east corner.

## Merchant Taylors' School

By C. H. REILLY

To be asked to design a complete set of new buildings for an ancient public school with centuries of tradition behind it and long lists of famous names such as Edmund Spencer and Lord Clive attached to it, is obviously to be set a peculiarly difficult problem. When the new site, though pleasant enough as a stretch of patterned English country with its chequer of fields and occasional clumps of trees, is a perfectly flat one with no particular characteristics and with no particular lines of approach, the problem is more difficult still. As regards the placing of the buildings, one has, of course, to give the right aspect to the class-rooms and so to place the groups of buildings on the site that the space left over for the playing fields is of adequate dimensions. Beyond that and in the larger modelling of the masses, one has a free hand; but has one a free hand in the smaller modelling that gives architectural expression? For instance, may one make a purely functional design to house such an historic institution, or must traditional methods of education be expressed by traditional forms of architecture? It would obviously be a very shocking thing to most of the old boys if the new school buildings looked like those of a modern municipal secondary school, and as things stand to-day in this country, it must be admitted that buildings designed in a purely functional way would certainly run that risk. They might even suggest to some that the education to be received within would be equally efficient and therefore different from that they received in the mid-Victorian buildings in Charterhouse Square half a century ago; different and therefore worse.

Mr. W. G. Newton has approached this difficult problem with the open and sensitive mind one expects from him. He has been modern, functional up to a certain point in the chief working parts of the buildings such as the class-rooms, but he has been what he wittily calls top-hatted, in the more ceremonial parts. The great hall, for instance, the mass of which dominates the whole design, has a Roman cornice, while the two ends of it each culminate in something suspiciously like a pediment. Yet one sees this rising over long stretches of class-room windows divided horizontally and whose dimensions and proportions bear no relation whatever to the Orders. Again there are masses of quiet pleasant neo-Georgian buildings such as the headmaster's house,

and the first boarding house, very delightful in themselves, where the vertical proportions of the windows, the pediment and columns to an entrance door and many other touches, suggest a cultured domestic life based on the elegancies of the eighteenth century and totally regardless of the hint of coming revolution which the class-rooms and certain corridors seem to convey. There are, too, delightful touches of gaiety here and there, a suggestion of a cabaret, even the curtains of the examination hall and long windows with curvilinear balconies to the library calling for elaborate feminine toilets which seem to say "Why not enjoy life even at school? Why be so pedantic about consistency? This is not an establishment merely for cramming the young with facts. It is not today even an old-fashioned public school where character is so trained that all its products think, speak and behave in all circumstances alike. It is something much more broadminded and liberal than that and an admixture of Swedish detail, Dutch brickwork, the later English Renaissance and German functionalism are not amiss if they make a noble whole, especially when, as here, a genuine effort has been made to fuse all the elements together through the tact and personality of the architect." I do not presume to know whether ideas of this kind were in Newton's mind while he worked at this great commission. I only know that this is what the buildings seemed to convey to me, and that it is a pleasant impression and an adequate answer as things stand today to this peculiarly English programme. I say "as things stand today," because I feel it will be possible for the archaeologist of the future to date this building within a few years and that I think is a compliment. It means that the buildings are true to their epoch, that they are no reproduction of a past one, that indeed they show very exactly how far a leading and highly sensitive and cultivated member of the more conservative school of English architects had, in the early thirties of this century, moved in sympathy with the continental revolution in taste and expression and how far he had remained an English traditionalist. Let us now examine the work in more detail.

It will be remembered that the plan consists of an oblong central court which seems rectangular when one is in it,

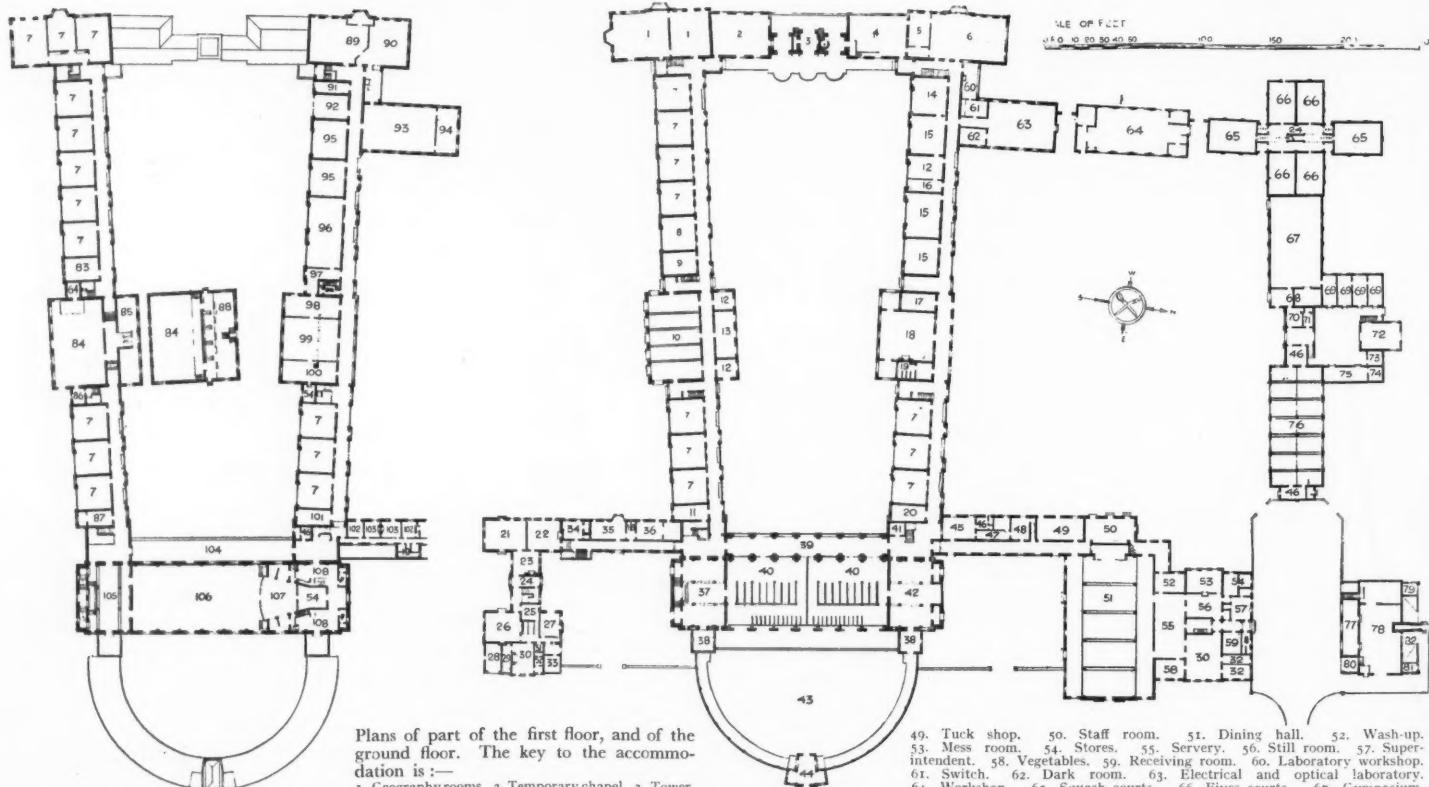
## MERCHANT TAYLORS' SCHOOL

but which really expands towards the tower end, a refinement which even if not realized gives, I think, life and interest and prevents mechanical hardness. Across the narrower end stretches the great mass of the assembly hall with its array of entrance halls and cloakrooms for five hundred boys on the ground floor. This mass, very dignified with its single range of great windows, has its hall enhanced from the courtyard by the arched cloister, built with thin tile bricks and standing in front of it. Like the rest of the buildings it is of a rich brown tone due to the general colour of its brick walls and its great tile roof, a tone with which the rather brown artificial stone of the dressings harmonizes. At this point it may be emphasized how fine the brickwork is throughout the job, and what a credit it is alike to the architect and the builders, Messrs. Holland and Hannen and Cubitts. The bricks, which close at hand show a great variety of colour, come from Amersham and run four courses to ten inches except the very thin ones for the cloister, which are much narrower. It is this cloister particularly which shows the skill of the bricklayers. It can have been no easy task either to set it out or to execute it.

At the far end of the court is the low clock tower with its thin arched entrances, another solid piece of rather Dutch brickwork, very massive and monumental and with details such as the long narrow window with its corbelled balcony and the little arches over the pair of corbelled seats connecting the bigger ones, showing thought and invention. Indeed

that is the note of all the detail. One feels when it is based on tradition as well as when it is definitely modern, that it has been through the mind of the architect and emerged as something of his own and not merely a clever crib. Taken in itself this end of the courtyard both externally and internally is a delightful composition though one may doubt a little whether it is sufficiently big in scale, and especially the tower, to hold itself up against either its *vis-à-vis*, the great hall, or its neighbours the long sides of the courtyard.

These sides of the courtyard showing the windows of class-rooms in one case and of the corridor in the other are particularly interesting. In one way, they are the freshest part of the whole design, for in the main they accept with great frankness the modern feeling that a class-room must have one wall of glass—to be consistent, one would suggest of vita-glass, but that has not been conceded. We therefore have on one side a series of great windows with horizontal panes punctuated with broad piers which represent internally the masters' platforms. These are lit by long narrow vertical windows in the centre of each pier to which the architect has added, one suspects as pure decoration, though they might be pulled to by the master to keep the sun from the blackboard, long pale green shutters. On the corridor side of the courtyard the piers have vertical windows of a more ordinary width and without shutters, while the horizontal windows of the corridors are narrow and higher up to leave space for the lockers under them. Here



Plans of part of the first floor, and of the ground floor. The key to the accommodation is:—

1. Geography rooms.
2. Temporary chapel.
3. Tower.
4. Lecture theatre.
5. Prep. room.
6. Elementary W.C.s.
7. Class rooms.
8. Class room, now monitors and prompt.
9. Committee room.
10. Lecture and examination hall.
11. Committee room.
12. Department head.
13. Masters library.
14. Advanced physics.
15. Science.
16. Special laboratory.
17. Locker room.
18. Masters common room.
19. W.C.s.
20. Sub-stationery.
21. Drawing room.
22. Study.
23. Sitting hall.
24. Hall.
25. Pantry.
26. Dining room.
27. Servants' sitting room.
28. Garage.
29. Scullery.
30. Kitchen.
31. Store.
32. Larder.
33. Coal.
34. Secretary.
35. Reception room.
36. Medical inspection room.
37. South hall.
38. Vestibule.
39. Cloisters.
40. Cloak rooms.
41. Waiting room.
42. North hall.
43. East Garth.
44. Gate house.
45. Clerks.
46. Lavatories.
47. Stationery.
48. School secretary.
49. Tuck shop.
50. Staff room.
51. Dining hall.
52. Wash-up.
53. Mess room.
54. Stores.
55. Servery.
56. Still room.
57. Superintendent.
58. Vegetables.
59. Receiving room.
60. Laboratory workshop.
61. Switch.
62. Dark room.
63. Electrical and optical laboratory.
64. Workshop.
65. Squash courts.
66. Fives courts.
67. Gymnasium.
68. Remedial store.
69. Visitors' changing rooms.
70. Instruments.
71. O.T.C. store.
72. C.O.
73. R.S.M.
74. Armoury.
75. School changing room.
76. Fuel.
77. Boiler room.
78. Motor room.
79. Bin shed.
80. Ash pit.
81. Shed.
82. Committee room.
83. Library.
84. Art rooms.
85. Librarian.
86. Ladies' cloak room.
87. Junior reading room.
88. Advanced chemical.
89. Chemical lectures.
90. Chemistry store.
91. Physical chemistry laboratory.
92. Elementary chemical laboratory.
93. Balance room.
94. Form room.
95. Biology.
96. Biological prep. room.
97. Biological museum.
98. General science museum.
99. Archaeology museum.
100. Committee room.
101. Bedrooms.
102. Sitting rooms.
103. Flat.
104. Ante hall.
105. Assembly hall.
106. Stage.
107. Green room.

physics.

7. Class rooms.

8. Class room, now monitors and prompt.

9. Committee room.

10. Lecture and examination hall.

11. Committee room.

12. Department head.

13. Masters library.

14. Advanced physics.

15. Science.

16. Special laboratory.

17. Locker room.

18. Masters common room.

19. W.C.s.

20. Sub-stationery.

21. Drawing room.

22. Study.

23. Sitting hall.

24. Hall.

25. Pantry.

26. Dining room.

27. Servants' sitting room.

28. Garage.

29. Scullery.

30. Kitchen.

31. Store.

32. Larder.

33. Coal.

34. Secretary.

35. Reception room.

36. Medical inspection room.

37. South hall.

38. Vestibule.

39. Cloisters.

40. Cloak rooms.

41. Waiting room.

42. North hall.

43. East Garth.

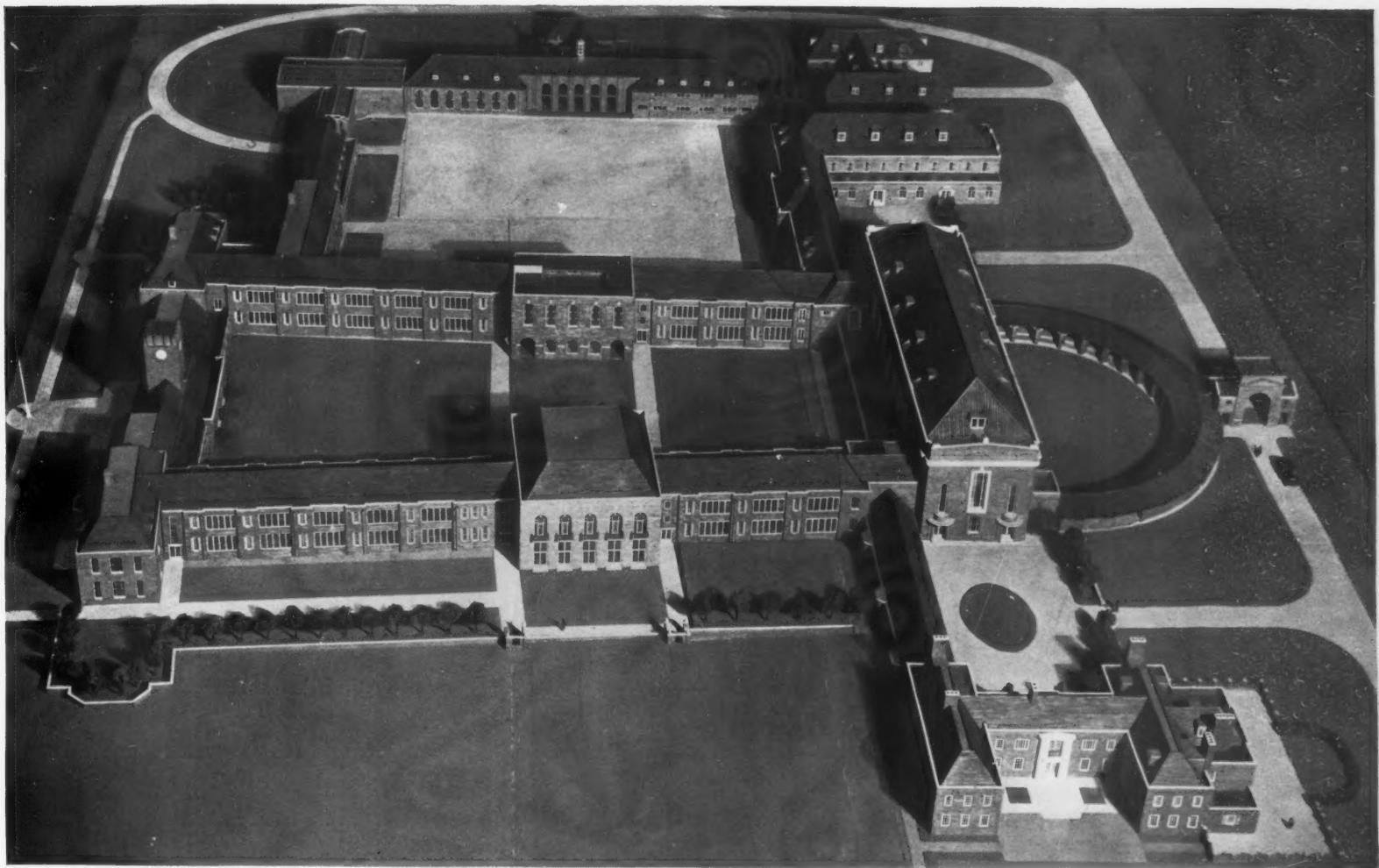
44. Gate house.

45. Clerks.

46. Lavatories.

47. Stationery.

48. School secretary.



A model of the New Merchant Taylors' School. This is an exceptionally fine example of the model-makers' art and might easily be mistaken for an air view of the actual school.

William G. Newton and Partners, *Architects.*

PLATE iii

May 1933





The great hall of the New Merchant Taylors' School. The headmaster's house can be seen on the left and the dining hall on the right. The great hall is on the upper floor. Below are the cloak-rooms (the windows masked by brick arches filled in with wrought iron grilles) and two entrance halls, approached from the gate house (on the right) by curved walks flanked by the low walls shown.

PLATE iv

*May 1933*



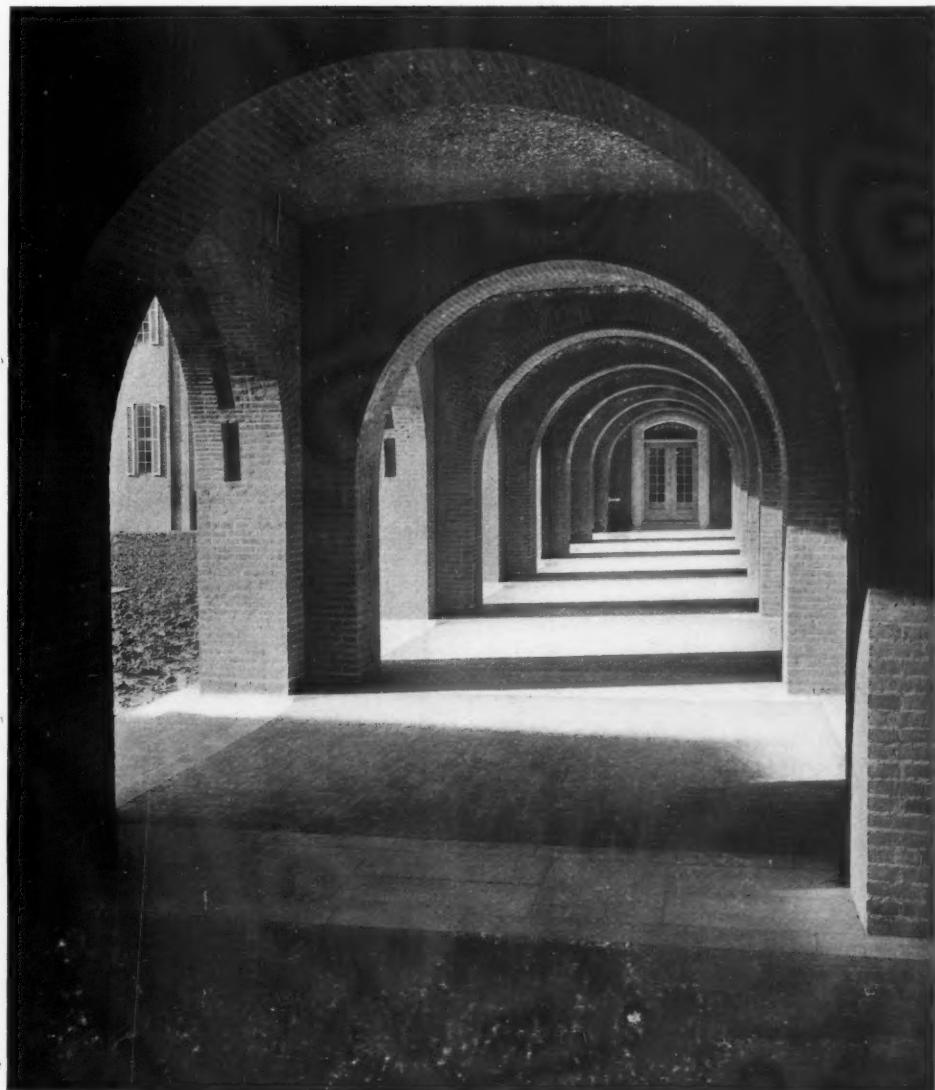
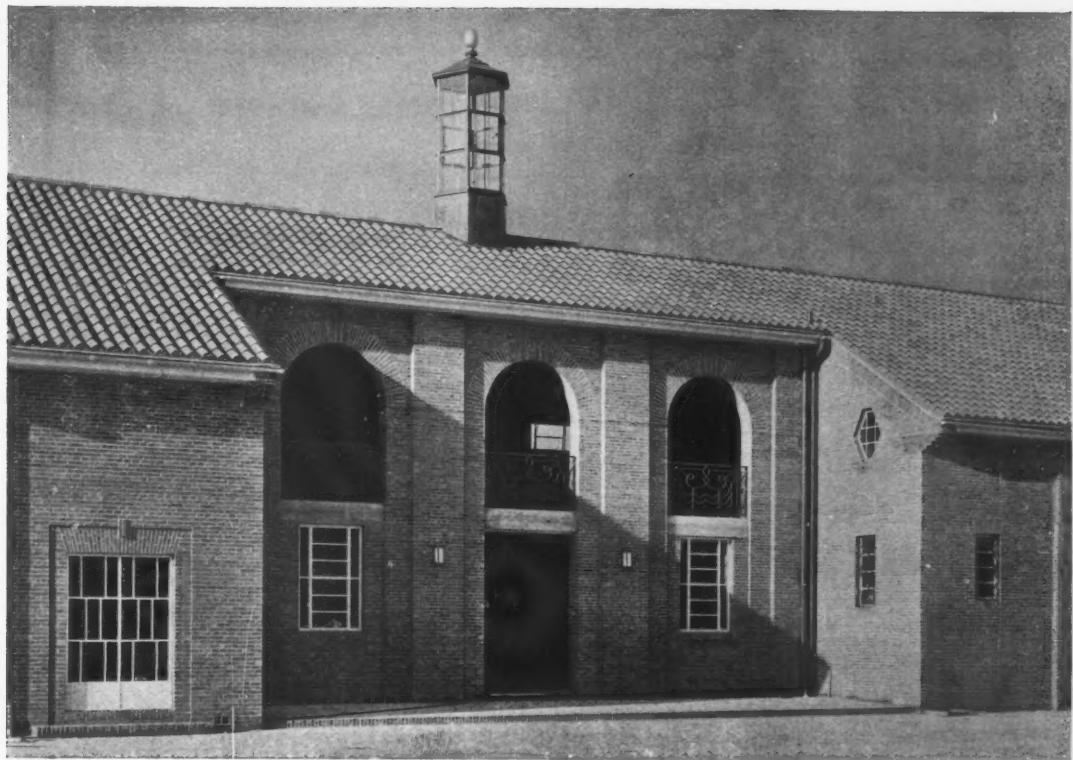


The tower and its arcades, closing the west end of the main quad of the New Merchant Taylors' School. The walling throughout is of mottled bricks, and, on the tower, texture is obtained by a pattern of projecting headers. The upper part of the tower is built of purpose-made bricks. The clock faces are of stone, and the spots for the hours are slightly projecting glass circles. The wrought iron grilles here, and generally throughout the buildings, are painted green on silver.

PLATE V

May 1933





*Above.*—On the left of the picture is a corner of the gymnasium block of the new Merchant Taylors' School ; in the centre is the arcade leading to the O.T.C. quarters ; and on the right can be seen a corner of the changing room block.  
*Left.*—Looking along the cloisters joining the north and south entrance halls. The headmaster has an uninterrupted view along these cloisters from the door of his study, through the connecting corridor of the Administration wing on the north, to the dining hall door.

## MERCHANT TAYLORS' SCHOOL

there is more plain brick-work between the piers and less need therefore for it in the piers. The resulting mixture of verticals and horizontals seems to me very satisfactory on both sides of the courtyard, and at the same time to make a very satisfactory balance without identity across it. The shutters, however, I cannot quite swallow in this logical part of the work. One should say, of course, that the centre of each side is punctuated with a tall block, in one case containing the library and examination hall, and in the other the museum and masters' common room (the latter being spoilt at present, as are the clean brightly coloured class-rooms, with the dirty old desks and furniture of fifty years ago).

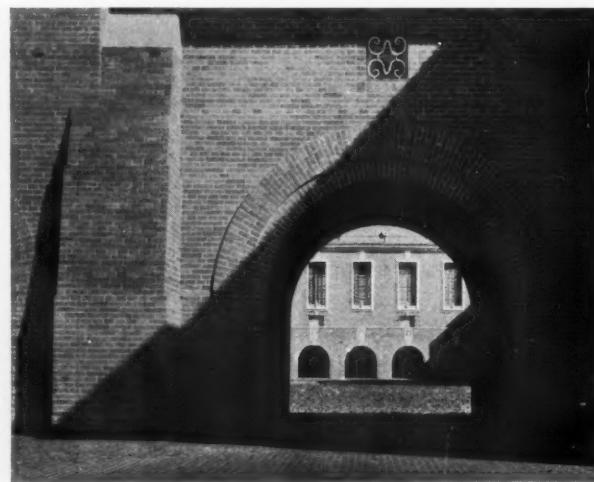
To the north of this court is a large partially open court paved in great chequers of concrete where drill can take place or, better still, human chess. Here, to the west, are the workshops and fives and squash courts, while to the north, is a simple but delightful composition of gymnasium, changing room and scout hall, one of the very best groups, as indeed it is one of the simplest in all the building. On the east side are the kitchens and the great concrete dining hall, another simple and very satisfactory building externally and internally. Indeed, internally, the great nave with wagon-shaped roof thirty-six feet span, which could only have been built in reinforced concrete without a tie, with its big concrete beams beginning as piers and running up the roof, is peculiarly effective. Here is concrete doing a piece of work that could not be done otherwise, which makes one regret a little that over the magnificent concrete ceiling of the big assembly hall, to which one will come directly, the architect has added, one supposes for effect, a big high-pitched timber and tile roof. This kitchen and dining block roughly balances on plan the headmaster's house on the opposite side of the great hall. Between these, and leading to the entrance halls at either end of the hall block, should have stretched out two circular arms of a cloister from a little central gatehouse, but so far only the latter has been built. It is a great pity that these have not yet been built, for looking at the buildings as a whole and their situation on the site, one cannot help feeling that the main axis and approach are not sufficiently marked. When these cloisters are built this defect will not be so apparent. Further out on the axis of this semi-circular court will be eventually the chapel flanked by a music block on one side and an art block on the other, and these again will help to reinforce it. At present both music and drawing are rather badly off, the provision for drawing seeming to show the usual contempt of the more backward public schools for this essential element in education, but the headmaster, to whose initiative in the first five years of his office this great building is due, assures me that that is far from his view.

Out again, still further to the north and east is the first boarding-house, which, like the headmaster's house and as one

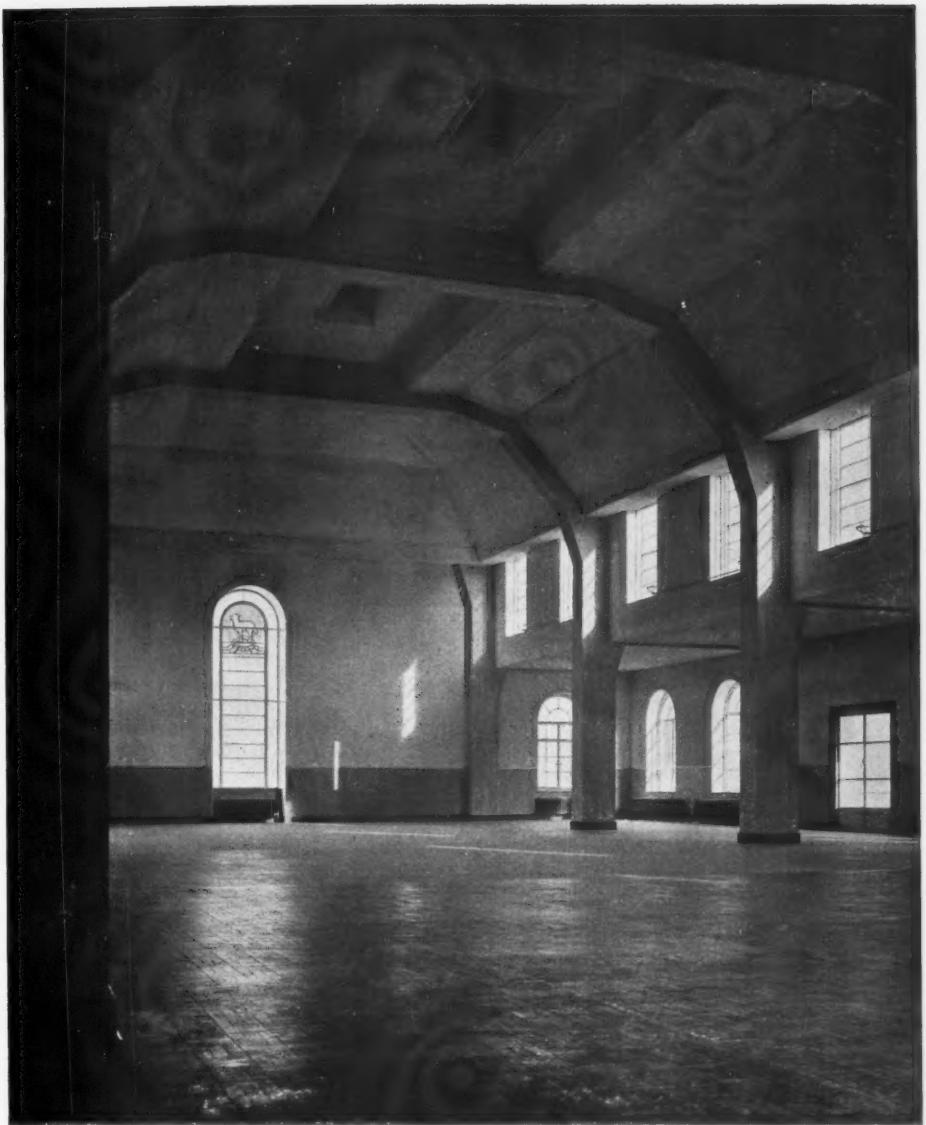
would expect from the architect, is a very happy domestic building where at once master and boys can feel at home.

This, then, is the general scheme, everywhere full of life and interest, thought and feeling. It remains to say something of the interiors, and if space allowed one could say a great deal, for in many ways they are more distinctive and interesting even than the exteriors. First, everywhere there is charming feeling for colour, changing from class-room to class-room and corridor to corridor. Where metal grilles are used, and they are fairly frequent, they are the occasion for delightfully happy designs, light and gay such as the Swedes are so fond of using. The woodwork, like the paint, varies almost from room to room, advantage being taken of the fine laminated woods of to-day. As with the brickwork, so with the joinery, the work is of the best, and is also by the general contractors. In the great assembly hall, the walls are lined with a figured Indian wood, which is very effective with its highly marked grain in emphasizing the long vertical lines as well as in helping the acoustics of a very lofty apartment. This hall internally is a great success, noble and dignified and full of interest. The ceiling is plain concrete, yet from below, with the marks of the centering upon it, one could swear it was of wood. The stage is very cleverly schemed both for orchestral concerts as well as for dramatic performances, and is to be made handsome with great parti-coloured curtains. In the lobby of this hall, as well as below in the entrance hall, are concrete columns left in their natural state (though in one case decorated with filigree silver caps) which most people will take for marble or some close-grained stone. Indeed, the finish of concrete in this building shows a great advance on anything I have seen in this country. Broken glass and a variety of strange materials have been used in the aggregate with results which do great credit to the courage and experimental outlook of both the architect and the Truscon Company. Careful experiment achieving valuable, new and interesting results is everywhere a mark of the work. One may fitly conclude this cursory survey of a building, which will repay very close inspection, by congratulating the architect on this spirit of adventure which one finds throughout his building but without which works of architecture, however costly and great, are born dead. One may include too in one's congratula-

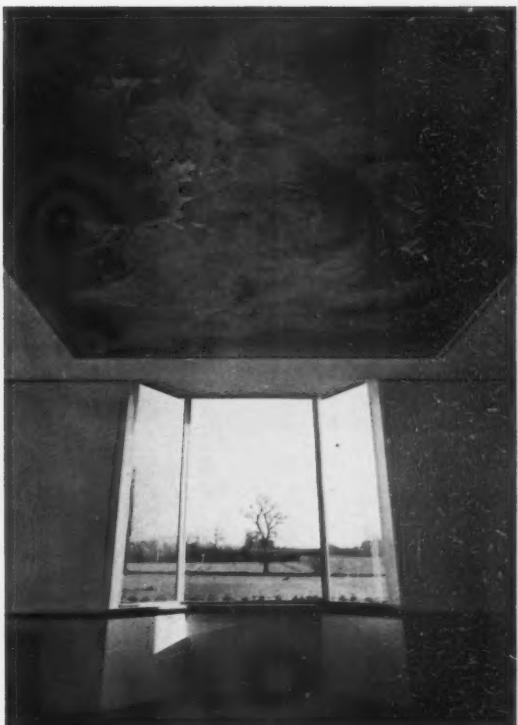
tions the great firm of builders and the army of craftsmen who have everywhere carried the architect's adventures to success. In these days too of timid authorities and hesitating employers, one should also include in one's congratulations the Ancient City Guild and the energetic headmaster of their great school, who, in spite of the abolition of the gold standard and the subsequent warnings of the Government with regard to spending, simply went ahead and with fine faith carried to a happy, and now justified conclusion, the work to which they had set their hands.



Looking back through one of the west tower arches. The wall is set back an inch at the arch springing, which leaves the arch slightly projecting. A buttress of the tower can be seen on the left.



*Left.*—The dining hall : The floor and skirting are of oak-coloured Granwood blocks, with green spots in a random pattern marking the aisles between the tables. The dado is grey with a gold capping. The walls above the dado are finished in sand-faced plaster and the columns and beams are left with the concrete exposed. The green is echoed in the stained glass "Lamb in Glory" in the East window, and the radiators also are green. The panels of the ventilators in the ceiling are brightly decorated in colour. *Bottom, left.*—A corner of the interior of the great hall. The walls are lined with Indian silver-grey wood up to the haunches of the concrete beams. The ceiling, with its main and secondary beams, is left with the concrete exposed. The organ grilles by the proscenium opening are of armour-bright. The proscenium curtain is not yet in place in this picture. *Bottom, right.*—The bay in the geography room, with a half-inch layered map of England on the ceiling as decoration.



## Book of the Month

# Baillie Scott & Beresford



"Architecture differs from all other arts in that it is inevitably wedded to the earth" (see review). A LODGE COTTAGE IN PEMBROKE, S. WALES. Architects: BAILLIE SCOTT AND BERESFORD. This building is in an exposed position and it was the original intention of the architects to follow the old tradition of the locality and give the whole building, roof and all, a waterproof coat of colourwash mixed with tallow. The owner preferred an umbrella to a mackintosh and insisted on gables.

By John Betjeman

HOUSES AND GARDENS. By M. H. Baillie Scott, F.R.I.B.A., M.R.A.C. and A. Edgar Beresford, F.R.I.B.A. London: Published by "Architecture Illustrated." Price 25s. net.

No pioneers had greater influence on domestic architecture at home and abroad, than had Lutyens, Voysey, E. Guy Dawber and Baillie Scott and Beresford at the beginning of this century. C. F. A. Voysey has published his manifesto, Sir Edwin Lutyens and E. Guy Dawber have spoken theirs, and now comes the manifesto of Messrs. Baillie Scott and Beresford in the form of a large illustrated book.

But these last have changed in their opinions and in their architecture since early days. There has been undoubtedly a tendency on the part of all such pioneers, except Lutyens, who has definitely sided with the exponents of the classical style, to react from *L'Art Nouveau* of 1900 and the not dissimilar Jazz-Modern of 1930, and to come out in favour of the Tudor and the Picturesque. This is to be expected, and the Tudor influence to be seen in the later works of Voysey and Baillie Scott and Beresford do not smack of Ye Olde Worlde Tudor of the speculative builder, but of a Tudor based on studied principle and consequent conviction.

The text of *Houses and Gardens* consists largely of reasoned invective against the architecture of concrete and steel and against an age which has made itself a slave of its own

creations, which has mistaken comfort for civilization. Yet I doubt whether the authors, had they been born into this generation, would have taken up such an attitude. The courage which caused them to build in an original and refreshing manner in 1900 would have been the cause of their adoption of modern methods to-day. It is all a question of how we think. Those great pioneers of the past, among whom are the authors, took up the escapist attitude of William Morris. They saw the machine and cursed it for over-riding craftsmanship. This generation has realized that by now there is no escape and that we must fall in with the machine, that the England of quiet lanes and elm-surrounded villages is finished, and instead a new international civilization has grown up in Europe of urban peoples whose church is the office, whose fields are the cinema, whose lanes are arterial roads, and whose houses are mere dormitories in a block of flats.

It takes courage to face all that: it took courage for Messrs. Baillie Scott and Beresford to design that house in the treetops for the Queen of Roumania, in which each room had a particular flower as its decorative motif, sun-flower, poppy and lily. But there are different sorts of courage. The truly modern architect of this generation is concerned with economics, and does not wish to intrude his personality into his work; he thinks in terms of groups, of one of which he is a member. His counterpart of the

late Victorian age is always a strong individualist with Voysey as his leader. For this reason Messrs. Baillie Scott and Beresford do not see the full significance of the joke that they make at the head of their fourth chapter:—

#### LABOUR SAVING

*"For Satan finds some mischief still  
For idle hands to do."* DR. WATTS.

They regard the invention of labour-saving devices as the cause of unemployment and incidentally of a decline in handicrafts. The contemporary architect will regard them as a means to an end, when all shall be educated and unemployment assume the civilized name of "leisure."

*Houses and Gardens* is not merely a period piece. However provocative and disagreeable the modern reader may find much of the text, he cannot fail to agree with these experienced architects on the principles on which they build their houses. "Architecture differs from all other arts in that it is inevitably wedded to the earth. Pictures and sculptures may be an end in themselves, complete and self-sufficient; they need not be considered in relation to any one spot or any group of surroundings or accessories. But it is a hopeless fallacy to think of any building as a similarly self-contained and solitary unit . . . We remember, for example, the bastions of some old castle, springing from the brow of a hill, which at first glance appear to be hewn from a natural rocky outcrop—or, maybe, a timbered cottage in a Kentish wood which so blends into its background that it almost appears as if the living trees have been woven together and the spaces filled in to form a wall." The admirably written text goes on to tell us "to take our cue first and foremost from the site which we hope to adorn, and to let its natural characteristics inspire the style and fashion of our building." But supposing the site is not in Kent or Cornwall and the building is not to house some pre-war individualist who can pay for it, would not the authors' principles, carried to their logical conclusion, result in the very architecture of concrete and steel which in other parts of the book they condemn? Supposing Messrs. Baillie Scott and Beresford were to build a tin-tack factory whose background was a cement works?

*Houses and Gardens* contains hundreds of illustrations of beautiful houses which harmonize with their surroundings and which are built by the architects in a style consistent with their interesting and stimulating text. But the houses are not for workers and their backgrounds are fast disappearing. This book is an important historical work and worthy of the closest study, but I, for one, cannot agree with it, because, much as I should like to, I cannot alter the conditions of the age in which I am unlucky enough to live.

#### Belles Lettres

LETTERING: A PLEA. By Percy Smith. Privately printed for the Dorian Workshop and Studio, London.

THE First Edition Club has inaugurated its new policy of producing books to serve as current exemplars for the publishing trade with a beautiful reprint of an article which originally appeared in *The Architectural Review*.<sup>1</sup> In honouring such an outstanding craftsman as Percy Smith—and incidentally the Editor of this Journal—bibliophiles have also honoured themselves. Britain's supremacy in the high art of carved and painted lettering—for that proud word can be used here without the slightest hesitation, or any qualification—is due to the work of three men who have owed nothing to Continental influence. The dogged enthusiasm of Eric Gill, Edward Johnson, and Percy Smith for *literæ humaniores* in their primary sense has gradually undermined the hard-headed business-man's equally dogged belief in the sacrosanct inhumanism of graphic *laissez-faire*. But much as they have accomplished, as much remains to be done. Within the last few years Neon lighting has given us an entirely new medium for the written word. Some Neon signs are fairly good, most are thoroughly bad; but few (if any) have been designed, as it is obviously necessary for them to be designed, by an expert letterer. When the *Underground* has the commercial sagacity to employ Percy Smith, why have not the electric-sign manufacturers, whose business is confined to selling luminous inscriptions? He would save them from such

<sup>1</sup> THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, April, 1928



WATERLOW COURT, HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB. Architects: BAILLIE SCOTT AND BERESFORD. This is a realization of a scheme for communal housing not on the principle of flats, each with its separate and more or less incompetent cook, but following the example of a college in a University. Waterlow Court houses that singular anomaly, the working lady. This illustration and that on the previous page are from "Houses and Gardens."

fitness-for-purpose solecisms as clumsily serifed Roman majuscules that look like amateurishly hand-written block capitals, and much merely meretricious phosphorescence. In another field that primitive *ébauche*, the "conventionalized clock-face," cries out for a designer who can create less beggarly ciphers than Morse. And the stout of heart still hope against hope that a professional letterer will be consulted when, at long last, the time comes to re-design the shoddy labels and trumpery medals which degrade the stamping of every postcard and the spending of every coin.

Bruce Rogers's "Centaur" and Frederic Warde's "Arrighi Italic," cast by the Monotype Corporation, are the types used in this elegant octavo booklet, which was printed by the Bradley Press on hand-made "Charles I" paper from the Barcham Green Mills in Kent. The title-page's partial invasion of the traditional blankness of its opposite sheet marks an interesting departure from precedent. Anyone unmoved to spontaneous delight by the fuller title facing page 1 must be the sort of person who sees "no justifiable grounds" for interfering with "the aspect of our cities"—the five cautionary words with which the formal pattern of its noble lettering is rounded off. The black and silver cover is of Quaker sobriety and seemliness. If income tax assessments were set out on the model of this "Plea"—even in the present incomprehensible, pre-MacMillan phraseology, and on that too-familiar "Geddes" paper—I should never dream of disputing their accuracy; and were I by some miracle in a position to do so, would feel it was a positive privilege to pay imposts demanded with such extreme typographical courtesy.

P. MORTON SHAND.

### Imperial Architecture

JEHOL, CITY OF EMPERORS. By Sven Hedin. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Price 18s. net.

THIS is a timely, though disappointing, book. Before long, Ch'ien Lung's splendid hunting-palace—those who have visited both buildings describe it as a finer work than the Forbidden City, being more individual and less stereotyped—may have crumbled into a weedy and neglected ruin. Here, in a mountainous country beyond the Wall, the great eighteenth-century emperor hunted the tiger, performed his devotions, and enjoyed the beauties of the landscape. Here, too, came the indefatigable Lord Macartney, ambassador of the court of George III, in his efforts to ratify a commercial agreement. Not unnaturally, he was much impressed by what he saw. Jehol, besides the palace buildings, can also show some fine examples of lamaist architecture, reverently modelled on the Dalai Lama's official residence. Dr. Sven Hedin, who made the journey from Peking at the behest of a Swedish-American philanthropist, anxious to build twin replicas of the Golden Pavilion, has brought back a collection of excellent photographs. Unfortunately, the letterpress of his book is, for the most part, arrant literary "padding."

P. Q.

### Back to Greece

GREECE AND THE AEGEAN. By Ernest A. Gardner. London: Harrap. Price 7s. 6d. net.

BY reason of the discovery in recent years of fascinating æsthetic qualities in the sculpture of the negroes and other primitive or "archaic" peoples, the classical Greeks have lost the prestige of unquestioned and unapproachable superiority in this art, awarded to them by the eighteenth century, and sentimentally acquiesced in by the Victorians. But to deny the true merits of the classical Greeks as sculptors and architects is to confess oneself a sycophant of fashion. Moreover, "Greek" architecture comprises not only the impressive remains of the classical age, but also the no less splendid monuments of the Byzantine period. There is therefore much inducement to visit Greece for those who have the intelligence and sensibility to enjoy, and the means and leisure to afford, such an excursion. By persons so qualified Professor Gardner's reliable, unpretentious, and informative book on Greece and the Aegean, to which is appended an excellent chapter on Constantinople by Mr. Stanley Casson, will certainly be appreciated as an invaluable travelling companion.

GILBERT ARMITAGE.

### Hardly Adequate

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL WAR MEMORIAL. With an Introduction by Sir Ian Hamilton, G.C.B., D.S.O. Edinburgh: Grant and Murray. Price 15/- net.

IT is to be feared that the promise held out to the reader who picks up this book, of a clear account of the inception and building of Scotland's very beautiful war memorial, is not likely to be fulfilled, for such printed text as there is consists of a discursive literary effort—described as an introduction—by Sir Ian Hamilton, who, with consummate skill, contrives, in some ten pages or so, to give us an emotionally phrased *pot-pourri* embodying numerous introspective reminiscences, without at any time coming into more than the most intangible contact with the memorial itself. And that is all—if we except a series of rather smudgy photographic reproductions in colour, and an appendix containing the names of those responsible for the construction and embellishment of the building.

No attempt has been made to describe the precise situation of the structure, or its relation to the Castle which crowns Edinburgh's historic Rock, while the absence of any kind of a plan makes it well-nigh impossible for those who have neither visited the memorial nor seen reproductions of the architect's drawings, to form a definite conception of Sir Robert Lorimer's executed work as a whole.

Despite these shortcomings, it is nevertheless possible to derive from the illustrations some idea of the high standard of craftsmanship attained, as well as a full measure of appreciation of the wealth of symbolism which has been introduced. The wrought-steel casket containing the regimental rolls of honour is a notable example of culture in design, and reposes worthily in the centre of the Shrine. It is at this spot that the architect's imagination has found its deepest expression, for the Stone of Remembrance, supporting the casket, is set in the living rock, which, in its unhewn ruggedness, emerges above the very floor.

L. F.

### Books Received

LE TEMPLE D'ANGKOR VAT. Vol. II. Les Editions de G. van Oest.

THE PENN COUNTRY OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE. C.P.R.E. Evans Brothers, Ltd. 5/- net.

THE BEAUTY OF FLIGHT. By Dr. Manfred Curry. John Miles, Ltd. 15/- net.

THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE OF BETH ALPHA. By E. L. Sukenik. Oxford University Press. 35/- net.

CITES-JARDINS, 1932. G. Benoit-Levy. 40 francs net.

RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE AND STONE CARVING IN SOUTHERN FRANCE IN THE TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES. By A. W. Clapham. Oxford University Press. 3/6 net.

TECHNIQUE OF EARLY GREEK SCULPTURE. By Stanley Casson. Oxford University Press. 25/- net.

CARAVAN CITIES. By M. Rostovtzeff. Oxford University Press. 15/- net.

MONASTIC BUILDINGS OF ELY. By T. D. Atkinson. Cambridge University Press. 2 Vols. 105/-.

TÜREN. By Adolf G. Schneck. Julius Hoffmann. RM. 12 net.

DIE KONSTRUKTION DES MOBELS. By Adolf G. Schneck and Gustav Kappler. Julius Hoffmann. RM. 9 net.

SCHRANK TISCH UND BETT. By Adolf G. Schneck. Julius Hoffmann. RM. 9 net.

DER STUHL. By Adolf G. Schneck. Julius Hoffmann. RM. 7 net.

THE VILLAGES OF ENGLAND. Second Edition. By A. K. Wickham. Batsford. 12/6 net.

DESIGN IN THE HOME. By Noel Carrington. Country Life. 15/- net.

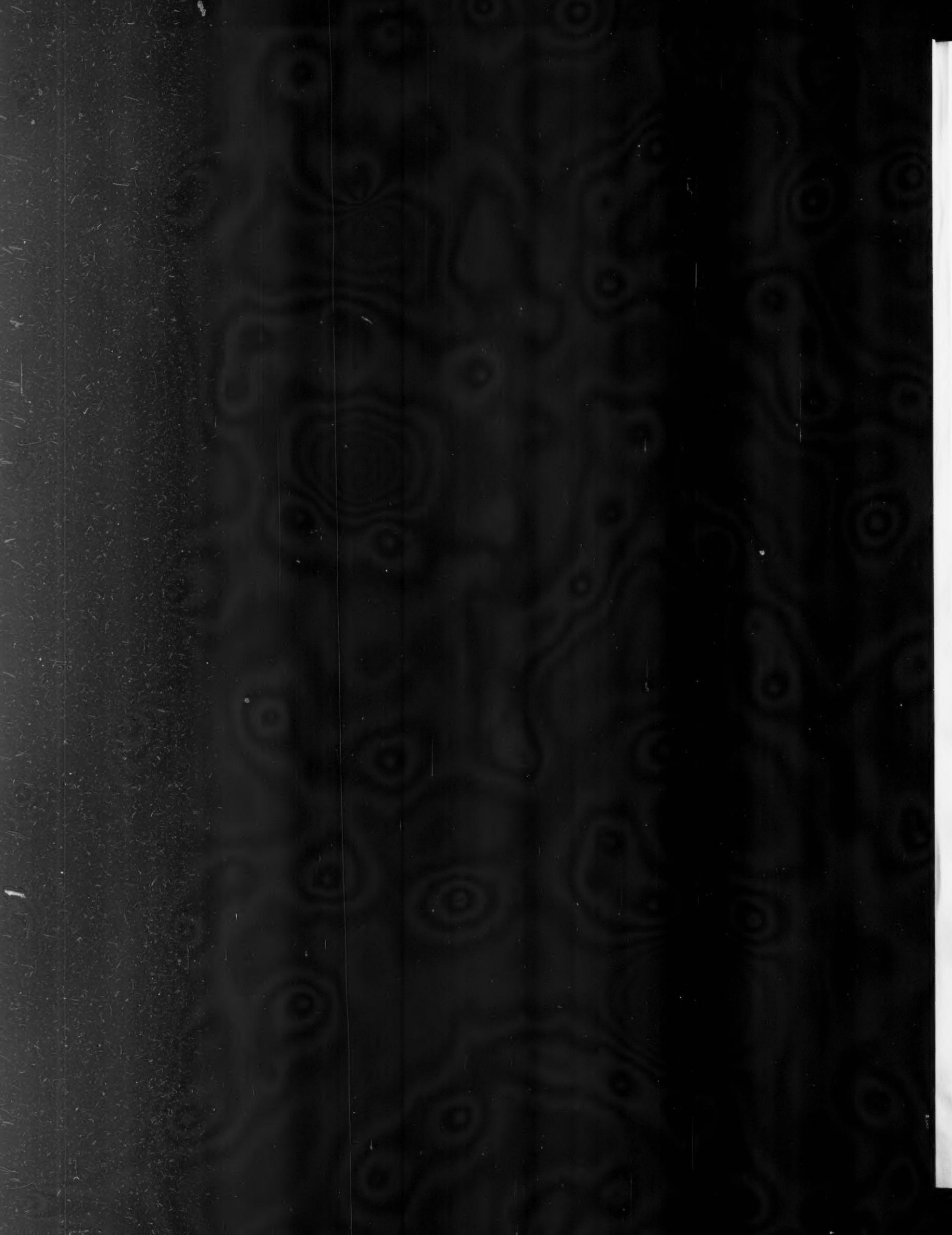
L'ART Hispano-Mauresque. By Henri Terrasse. Les éditeurs G. van Oest. 180 francs net.

THE PROFESSIONS. By A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson. Oxford University Press. 25/- net.

THE ART OF FLOWER ARRANGEMENT IN JAPAN. By A. L. Sadler. Country Life. 12/6 net.

ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF KASHMIR. By Ram Chandra Kak. The India Society. 25/- net.







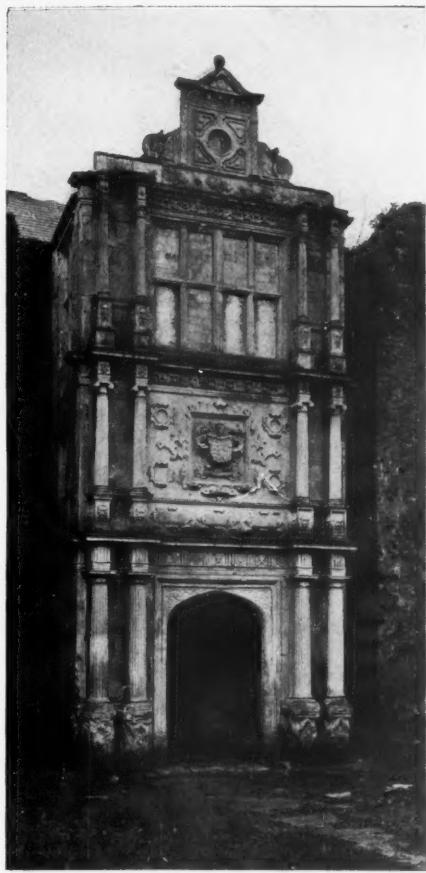
*AT CLOSE RANGE*

Churriguera's modified design of the Catafalque for the funeral of María Luisa de Orleans. The engraving is reproduced from Juan de Vera Tassis' *Noticias Historiales*. Vera Tassis tells us that Churriguera's original design, see Plate ii, would not fit into the church at first selected for the ceremony (San Jerónimo, the "Westminster Abbey" of Madrid, as San Francisco el Grande is its "St. Paul's"), and that for this and other reasons, it was decided to hold the ceremony in the Chapel of the Augustinian nuns, who were, moreover, anxious to have the honour. It seems likely, therefore, that Schubert's reproduction is Churriguera's design as submitted for the competition, while the engraving in Tassis' book is certainly the design erected. The two are sufficiently alike for one to be a modification of the other.

PLATE vi

*May 1933*

SELECTED EXAMPLES OF ARCHITECTURE

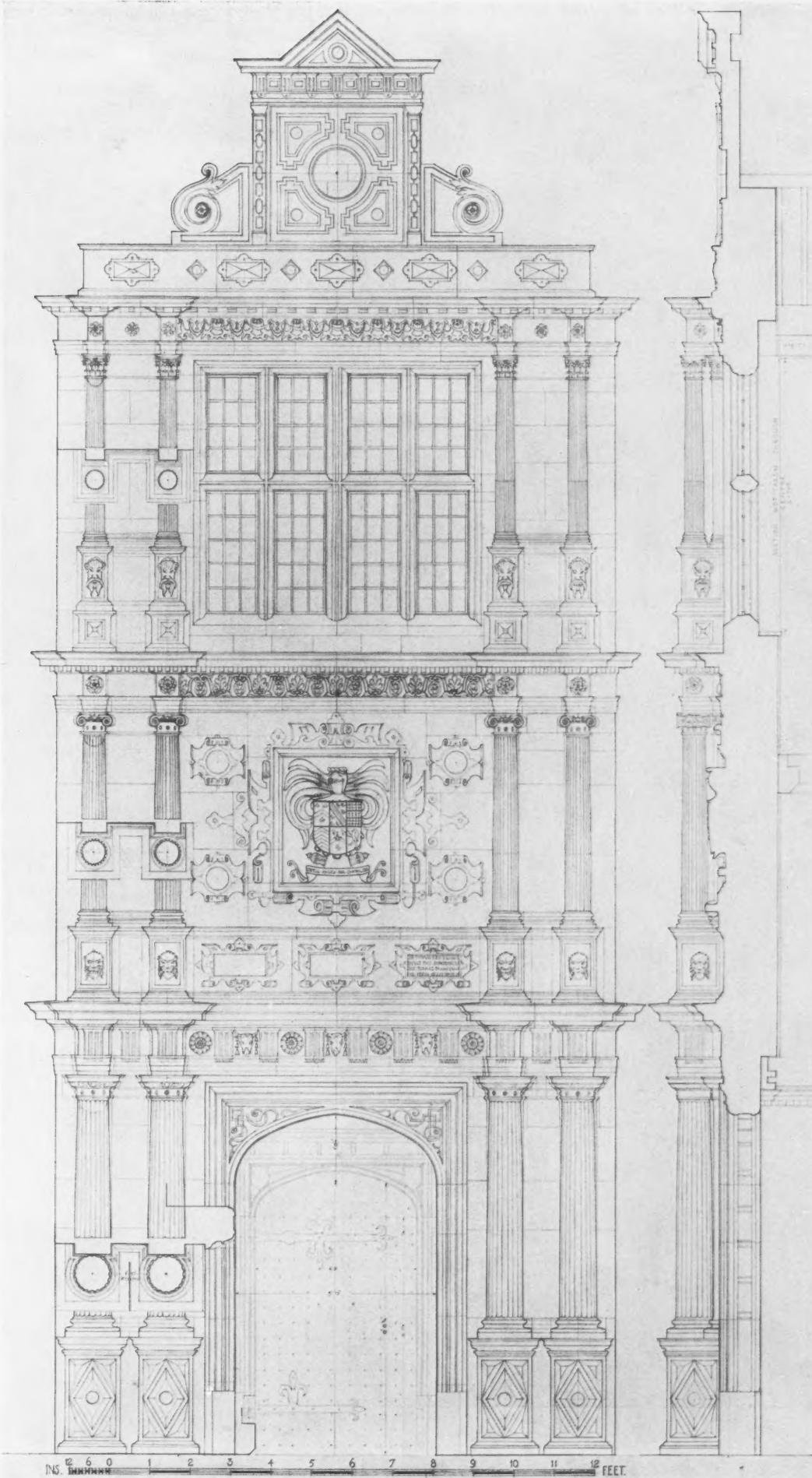


Reproduced by courtesy of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society.

Beaupre Castle ("Maes Issylt"), near Cowbridge, Glamorgan, appears to have been almost entirely rebuilt in the second half of the sixteenth century. The only earlier detail visible—on such inspection of the group of buildings as the ivy permits—is a cusped light in the gable of a detached building on the south side of the Great Hall.

Gwilym Tyrch, the architect, had the invaluable experience of studying and working as a master-mason on some of the best of contemporary European buildings. He had worked under Palladio in Northern Italy, and returned to Glamorgan towards the close of the century. In 1590 Richard Bassett commissioned Tyrch to design and build this famous porch within the courtyard, to grace the entrance to the Great Hall. This porch is not bonded into the main walls, and is certainly an addition not contemplated at the time of the reconstruction of the Hall. It is a strikingly beautiful and very ornate work of the English Renaissance, entirely free from Gothic tradition, and yet in harmony with the Elizabethan period details in the adjacent rooms. The porch consists of three storeys surmounted by a pediment. The entrance arch is flanked by pairs of Doric columns with pilasters and surmounted by an entablature very similar in detail to that of Palladio's Basilica, Vicenza. The façade of the first storey shows an elaborate heraldic achievement of the Bassett arms and their motto, "Better death than shame," and is flanked with an Ionic order. Tudor roses are worked in the frieze over each capital and the whole frieze and entablature is a remarkable piece of work.

The porch was measured and drawn by L. F. Richards.



# ART AND



# COMMERCE -

MODERN ART IS B  
in the better sense. A  
tributors, who wish to  
public, now realise the  
artist with whom "pu  
design second, can no longer  
Or perhaps that statement  
the whole, be more accurate  
of "good publicity" for the  
artist, because he is a  
finer publicist than the  
Take, for instance,  
Hitherto, the clay figure



4

5

## E — a New Departure

ODERN ART IS BECOMING COMMERCIALISED—but in a better sense. Advertisers, manufacturers, distributors, who wish to catch the eye of the buying public, now realise that the old type of commercial art, with whom "publicity value" ranked first and "art" second, can no longer give them what they need. Perhaps that statement is misleading; it might, on the whole, be more accurate to say that the criterion of "good publicity" has changed, that the serious artist, because he is more intelligent, often proves a better publicist than the mere journeyman. For instance, the works reproduced above, 1 to 6, the lay figures in our shop windows, designed

to show off dresses, corsets and stockings have been an anonymous and inexpressive tribe who, for their own sake, would never tempt one to look again. They were unworthy caryatids of the Temple of Fashion. But now the proprietors of the Charnaux Patent Corset Company, anxious to display their product to the greatest advantage, have had the idea of approaching a modern sculptor and suggesting that he should attack their problem from a new angle.

The result is Frank Dobson's Charnaux *Venus*, 1. This torso which is to be duplicated in papier maché—a cast is also to be made in bronze—represents an interesting and delightful compromise between the sculptor's own style and his commercial problem. It has been accomplished without loss of individuality; the fact that he has to satisfy a definite need, which entails certain definite limitations, often stimulates,

rather than cramps, an artist's mind, just as the obstinacy of his material may itself excite him. No artist can hope to work in a void, and every difficulty is a potential source of enlightenment.

Then there is the interest of completing and co-ordinating one's own effort. Beside his modern *Venus* in the round, Mr. Dobson has designed a series of panels, depicting types of elegance throughout the ages, which are to serve as its complement and setting. The colour is uniformly blue and black, on which a pale-blue—and a single white—outline has been superimposed. We can turn from a charming Etruscan virgin, 2, to the waisted and mannered beauty of a Cretan pole-jumper, 3; from a Cranach Eve, 4, to the voluptuous graces of a Boucher nymph, 5. Though severely diagrammatic in intention, as Mr. Dobson is careful to point out, in effect his designs are decorative and rhythmic.

P.Q.

# A Free Commentary

By Junius

**I**F a Good Fairy were to ask me what in our present troubles she could do for us all, I am not at all sure that I shouldn't reply in effect: Please arrange for us to get the Truth. Truth, always inclined to hide shyly in her well, was pushed right under water by the propagandists in the war, and still lies there.

\* \* \*

If our Fairy were Humorous as well as Good she might perhaps say: "But I am really surprised at such a request from an Englishman. Is it not well known"—and here one pretty eyelid might flicker slightly—"that whatever may happen to other benighted countries or continents, in yours, surely, never is the truth distorted, manipulated or suppressed in the interest of any policy or party or selfish private interest?" And then she would very properly disappear—

\* \* \*

—just returning for a moment in the rôle of Mischievous Philosopher Fairy to say: "And what would you do with your Truth when you got it? There's an awful lot of It, and It's very complicated. Cultivate your garden, my friend, cultivate your garden, and let the world go by!"—which indeed is about all that's left for us to do in our impotence, while above the garden is precariously poised an avalanche, so that one is always working with one eye anxiously cast over one's shoulder. By the mass, the courage with which men go on getting and spending and building (however queerly), and marrying and giving in marriage and begetting children, and flying over the Himalayas, and passionately assuming or passionately refusing to assume shirts of red or brown or black, must surely win the admiration mixed with pity of whatever gods there be!

\* \* \*

But to cut short these wild and futile reflections and return to the business of Truth. In the matter of newspapers, for instance, is it mere illusion that induces so many of us to believe that (quite apart from our more candidly and crudely manipulated sheets) even the soberest and most reputable practise an economy of truth which would have shocked us before the war? I think not. And one must suppose it is because we are still at war much more fundamental and on a wider front.

\* \* \*

The same general thought has occurred to the promoters of *The Week*, of which specimen copies have been recently circulated to many publicists and semi-publicists. This is in the form of loose folio typewritten stencil-duplicated sheets, in brown ink on a buff paper, pleasant and easy to read, well written in an idiom more homely and direct, and definitely more compressed than is usual in our serious journals.

\* \* \*

*The Week* presents itself as a weekly purveyor of news, not of commentary on news. The flattering assumption is that we are capable of making that commentary ourselves (a gloomy outlook for professional commentators generally if the project succeeds and establishes a precedent!). It claims to gather its news mainly by direct reporting here and abroad, not by the intelligent use of scissors. It is not interested in murder and other jolly private crime, domestic or financial scandal, sport, fashion, the arts. International politics and economics are its field.

\* \* \*

As to the authenticity of the news purveyed, it is obviously not possible for an unprivileged layman to have a useful opinion. In the two issues I have examined, a careful comparison with the news of the week published in the established serious papers does show definite differences of detail and of emphasis; the entanglements of the international situation are handled with an unusual candour, and in two important instances at least

situations have been outlined with a clarity which has afterwards been imitated in the daily Press. That need not, of course, necessarily mean that the journal had exceptional sources of information, but merely that it had exercised a less conventional discretion.

\* \* \*

"Everyone is aware," says a covering circular, "of the more or less concealed motives, financial, political, personal, that dominate the news policy of the big Press. In addition, the big Press, precisely by reason of its bigness, tries to select all its news for all its readers. The wider it spreads the shallower it gets. What it does not suppress it dilutes."

\* \* \*

Well, those in whom that paragraph wakes a sympathetic echo might do worse than give a helping hand to the new venture at the cost of twelve shillings a year. There seems nothing tendentious or Machiavellian in its selections. But Propaganda, that assiduous jade—by Publicity out of Intrigue—has its subtleties. For all we know to the contrary *The Week* may be financed by Herr Hitler or the Chief Rabbi or Mr. Norman Davis. However, until evidence of that be forthcoming, the babe might well have the benefit of the doubt. It seems to deserve it. It will certainly need all the help it can get. Its cradle is at 34 Victoria Street, S.W.1.

\* \* \*

This project of a newspaper which shall be absolutely independent and authoritative is an old dream. Twenty years ago an intelligent and persuasive young Dane was going about England and the Continent canvassing the idea of an international newspaper, *Potentia*, whose honesty should be vouched for by a board of eminent worthies in all countries, men unconnected with politics or Press or high finance—which wasn't then quite so high as now. But he was not persuasive enough, and the project was still-born. It might be revived possibly under the aegis of APA.

\* \* \*

Many of us must have wished that we could have got through the war without those feats of imaginative lying which are supposed to have been worth so many battalions to us, and to have been so much bigger and better, or at least so much more effective than the enemy's. Not a very logical wish, say the casuists, as it is of the very essence of strategy to deceive, and if a Q-boat is good war ethics, why boggle at a corpse factory? But I doubt if Governments and politicians and journalists realize how deep and widespread the distrust of the printed word now is among the instructed. . . . The sword of propaganda cannot in fact be beaten into a ploughshare. The metal perished.

\* \* \*

The really logical end of it all is the Hitlerite and the Stalinite method. And as when one nation develops a new arm the others are, however unwillingly, forced to follow it, are we to look to barrage and counter-barrage of propaganda as substitute for the collection and exchange of honest news? A dismal, nay a deadly, but by no means an unlikely, prospect.

\* \* \*

The new edition of *The Adventure of Building* has just been published. This brings the total number of copies printed up to 51,000. A few minor revisions have been made in the text, but the chief difference from the old edition lies in the illustrations, which are now all of cheaper houses costing about £1,000. Moreover, not more than one house in any one county is now included.

\* \* \*

The Berks, Bucks and Oxon Society has suddenly gone mad and bought 30,000 copies for distribution amongst the residents of its counties. Will all the coloured counties please copy? Propaganda? Certainly. But Mr. J. M. Keynes, the Wise Spender, must be supported.

\* \* \*

I can, however, authoritatively deny the rumour that an Epstein version of P. Graham, the author of the booklet, is to be erected in the atrium of the Building Centre.

# THE STAIRCASE

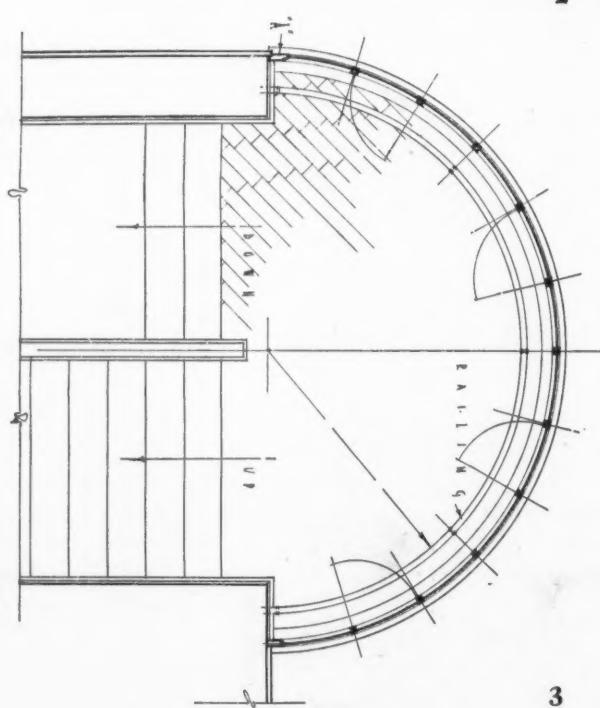
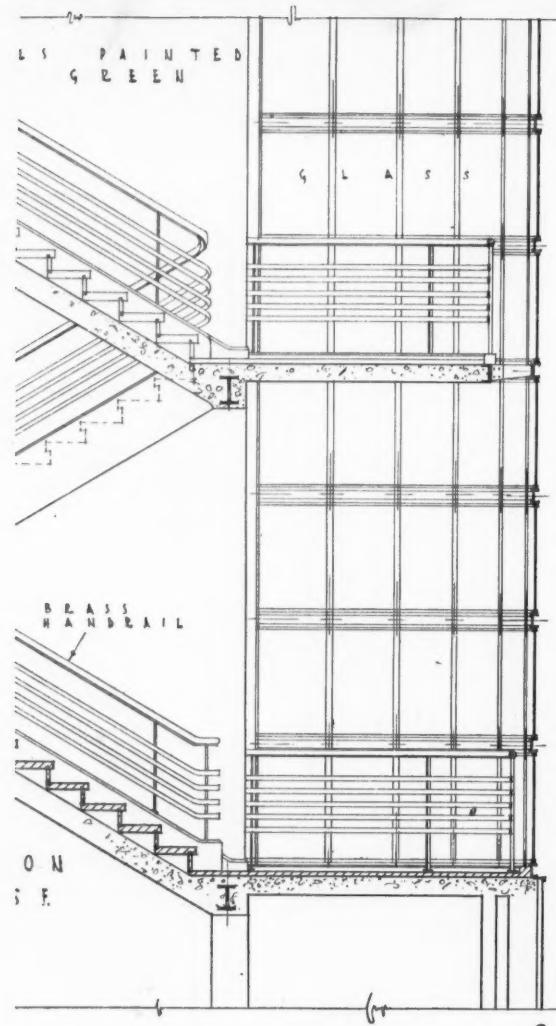


The exit staircase from the Carter tile and pottery showrooms at Poole. The main walls are lined with the new Carter 12" x 8" faience tiles of a broken fawn colour, the solid balustrade with 6" x 6" jade green dull surface tiles, with a black terrazzo skirting. The floor is ceramic mosaic, and the staircase pre-cast terrazzo with dark green treads and black risers.

Architect: Howard Robertson (Stanley Hall and Easton and Robertson).

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
DECORATION AND  
CRAFTSMANSHIP  
SUPPLEMENT

May 1933



2, 3, 4. One of the two principal staircases in the Breuninger Store, Stuttgart. Eisenlohr and Pfennig, architects. The actual stairs are within the building, but the half-landings project into a semi-circular bay, which is glazed through its entire height, and are cantilevered from beams which form part of the general steel frame. 2 is a section through the staircase; 3, plan at the first landing; and 4, the staircase as the camera sees it.

THE staircase is a necessary feature in all buildings which are of a greater height than one storey. It is notorious that architects in fiction frequently neglect to provide any means of communication between various floors. In fact, however, the plans of most buildings of small compass are governed by the placing of stairs, while in larger ones the problem is complicated by the subordination of stairs to lifts. Stairs are required by law. Internally they can be tiresome. Externally as fire escapes, they are almost always hideous; but recently it has been newly appreciated that external staircases may be designed as architectural features of great distinction. This discovery is of great practical and aesthetic value, for the "expression" of staircases has always been a vexed point with critics. By some it was held that to allow a sloping string to cross a window, was a confession of weakness, by others that an external manifestation of communication was equally weak.

In the later days of the nineteenth century when the Gothic revival was slowly giving way to a revival of Renaissance manners, there was born an unfortunate (as we should say now) compromise whereby buildings affected not to be ashamed of their staircases, and otherwise orderly façades became interrupted by sudden swift changes in fenestration which made abundantly clear the diagonal progress behind. This unequivocal declaration of the obvious was no new idea, the only novelty lay in the revolting way in which it was made evident. The Henri I staircase at Blois had announced quite clearly that stairs were present, and at Chambord too the architect had not been ashamed to make a virtue of necessity. Each of these staircases showed its presence externally in ways which were widely different; yet each was eminently satisfactory, and we may congratulate ourselves that the innovation made by this country so much later was not followed with enthusiasm for any great length of time. By the end of the nineteenth century the long vertical window extending through several storeys had provided a happier solution, and one moreover from which was derived all the more satisfactory staircase treatments of modern times.

# The Staircase

## By Harold Tomlinson

All rising to great place is by a winding stair.

BACON.

**I**N buildings with tall rooms, staircases in a single straight flight are rarely possible. Quite apart from the desirability of providing landings in order to lessen fatigue, the length would often be greater than that of the building. Hence stairs which approximate to the spiral (in that they return on themselves) are inevitable in all but the longest buildings.

The true spiral was almost always the rule in mediæval times both for ecclesiastical and domestic work. In churches the stairs were of subsidiary importance, their chief function being to provide access to belfries, and their laborious ascent was concealed in the great thickness of the walls. Domestic buildings were conceived essentially as fortresses, and in consequence external projections were unpopular, and they too had spiral stairs hidden in the walls. Towards the end of the middle ages

improved masonry and thinner walls resulted in the external belfry turrets so common in the South-West, while more peaceful times had seen a similar development in domestic building. In the Baronial architecture of Scotland which was derived from the Châteaux of France, a curious phenomenon arose. Here the turrets appeared as excrescences on the towers; but as often as not they are devoid of staircases, the ascent once more being concealed in the walls, and the turrets used to provide circular rooms of great charm.

Today, particularly on the Continent, there is a tendency to revert to the placing of staircases outside the main building, and for large blocks with complex plans, such as are seen in flats and hospitals, there is much to be said in favour of the practice. In the first place each floor can be planned

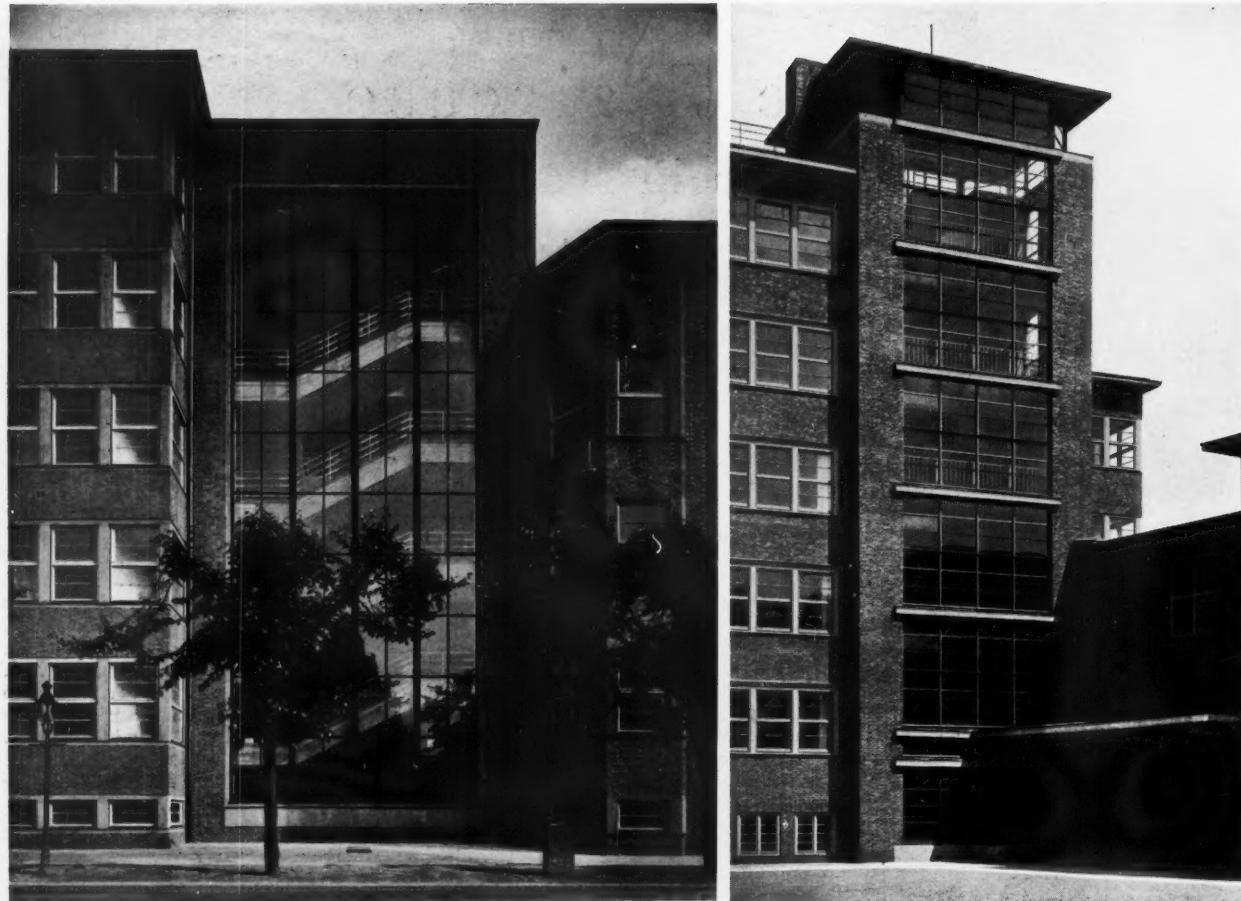
with the freedom of a single storey building, secondly all communications can be placed on the North side, so leaving the South unobstructed, while among other advantages it will be appreciated that floors thus connected may readily be modified to meet the exigencies of any new set of conditions which the future may impose.

### EXTERNAL STAIRCASES

External staircases can be lighted both naturally and artificially with great ease, some recent examples consisting simply of cages of glass extending from ground to roof, and yet varying between such wide limits as the ordered elegance of Dr. Schumacher's School at Hamburg, and bald statements of fact such as that in the house by Connell and Ward.



5. Staircase in the Hochhaus, Vienna, an eighteen-storey building containing offices and flats.  
Architects : Theiss & Jaksch.



6. The staircase bay of the elementary school in Wendin-Strasse, Hamburg.  
 7. The staircase tower of the principal front of the boys' school in Amalie-Dietrichsweg, Hamburg. In this school the class rooms are arranged on

either side of a central corridor and the staircase tower is therefore the only source of light for the corridor. For this reason the outer wall of the tower is faced with glass. The architect for both schools was Dr. Fritz Schumacher.

In flats the external staircase has a further advantage in the ease with which balconies may be built to provide communication outside, and the equivalent of a "front door." Each balcony is sheltered by the one above, and flat dwellers are given a measure of privacy which was denied them in the past.

The L.C.C. fireproof staircase, with its small "rise" and great "going" presents fewer difficulties when placed externally, and vast internal areas, expensive both in first cost, and in maintenance, need no longer occupy so considerable a proportion of the more valuable of building sites.

#### THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE

The spiral staircase has received a new lease of life of late, and in doing so has adopted new guises. It is no longer concealed, and whether employed externally or internally, an attempt is usually made to exhibit its form as a "feature" of the building. It has found favour with the advocates of "free" planning because it occupies so little floor space, and it is particularly valuable in connecting rooms which are necessarily separated from a main staircase, and yet which are not of sufficient importance to justify a subsidiary flight of one of the more normal forms.

The new spirals are frequently concrete monoliths either with balustrades cast *in situ*, or of metal.

A spiral staircase of unique interest is to be seen in the transport bridge at Marseilles, and although this was carried out early in the present century its essentially functional nature is in tune with the tendencies of the present day. This stair consists of standard cast iron treads and risers supported around their periphery by a cage of suspended steel cables which forms a light, safe, and pleasing form of construction for utilitarian purposes.

In public buildings winders are generally not permissible, and return is achieved by means of landings; but in domestic work architects have often shown great ingenuity in conserving space by means of winders, and in the best examples without making descent more difficult, or more dangerous. Sir Edwin Lutyens has shown recently by his new house in Cheyne Walk that even in smaller works the range of variation has not been exhausted. He has fitted into a square hall a flight consisting of winders and landings at surprisingly easy intervals, the whole giving an air of spaciousness to a confined space, and in an entirely novel manner. The traditional buildings of England have wooden stairs which are

more or less stereotyped in planning, variety being gained mainly by the forms of newels, balusters and handrails, and although in the last two centuries some notable efforts in construction were undertaken, the plans were little altered. The "suspension" staircase which used to be shown in most textbooks on joinery, was probably the most remarkable. This staircase was devoid of all apparent support. It consisted usually of a straight flight giving access from a landing to two other flights at right angles; the approach flight and the side flights being carried, not on carriages, but on metal tension rods which passed under the landing and lateral flights to the flanking walls. Today the need for such ingenuity no longer exists, for cranked steel joists make simple even the most intricate changes of direction. In passing it is amusing to note that in Waterhouse's staircase at the New University Club these joists (supporting a stone staircase) are exposed, and salute is made to the Gothic spirit by rivet heads embossed with Tudor roses!

It has often been said that the French carpenters and joiners are always more adventurous than are our own, and so far as staircases are concerned this would seem to hold good. To the French both windows

[Continued on page 221]

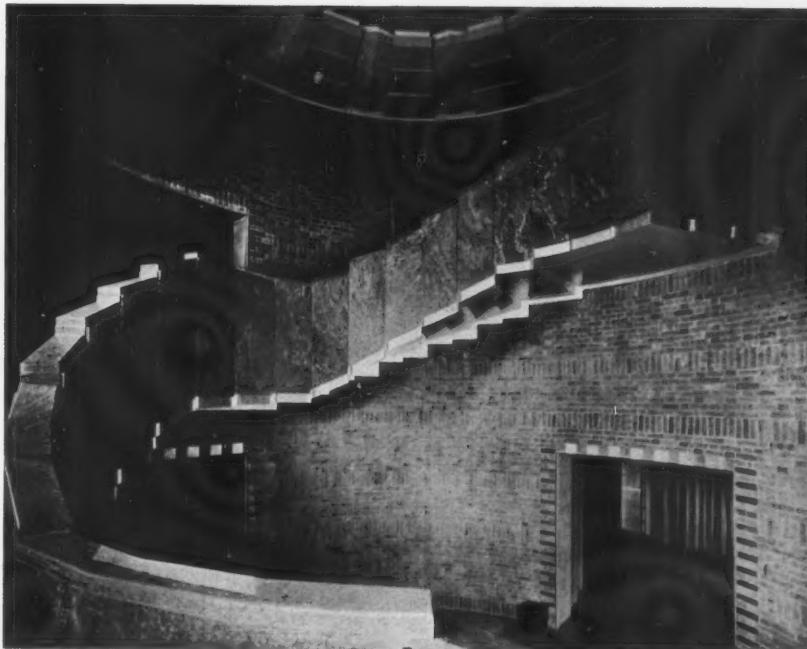
8. Staircase in the Realgymnasium School at Hietzing, Vienna. The solid concrete balustrade has had the aggregate exposed. Architects: Theiss and Jaksch. 9. An oblique view of the staircase cage in the Rathaus, Rüstringen. Plain tubular handrails are attached to a flat coping with massive bronze clamps. Architect: Fritz Hoger. 10. The upper flights of the staircase of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon. The reinforced concrete balustrade is covered with slabs of Swedish green marble. Architects: Scott, Chesterton and Shepherd. Craftsmen: For the concrete spiral and balustrade core, The Kleine Company. Swedish green marble by H. T. Jenkins and Son. Metal balustrade on the wall side by Comyn Ching and Company; and stone steps by J. F. Booth and Son.



8



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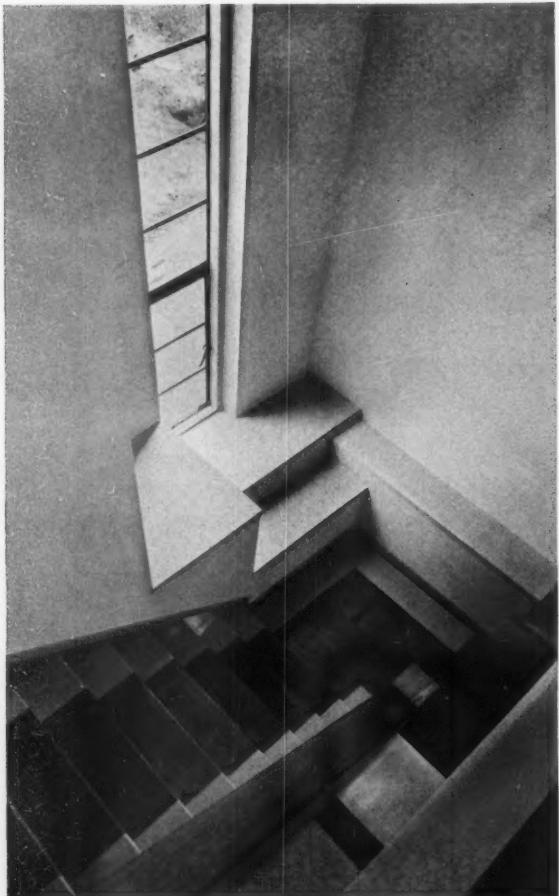


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## THE CRAFTSMAN'S PORTFOLIO

11. The staircase of one of a pair of houses at Maidenhead. The balustrade is solid and the base of the window is blocked up at its base in receding planes. The top is finished with travertine,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  in. thick and projecting  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. from the plaster. *Architect* : G. Alan Fortescue. *Craftsmen* : For the travertine, Art Pavements and Decorations ; for the window, Crittall Manufacturing Company. 12. The staircase in the tuberculosis pavilion at the City of Vienna Hospital. The balustrade is metal, the flooring is cork linoleum and the skirtings of the stairs are marble. *Architects* : Dr. Fritz Judtmann and Egon Riss. 13. The main staircase in the *Conte di Savoia*. The balustrade is Indian nutwood upheld by bronze fretwork and relieved



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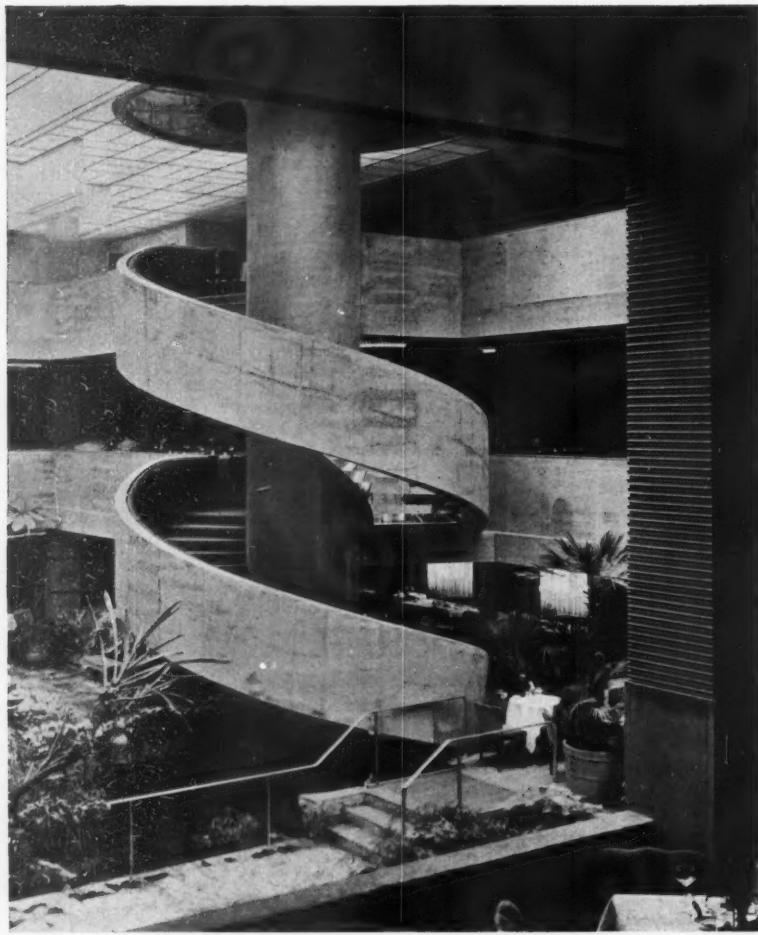
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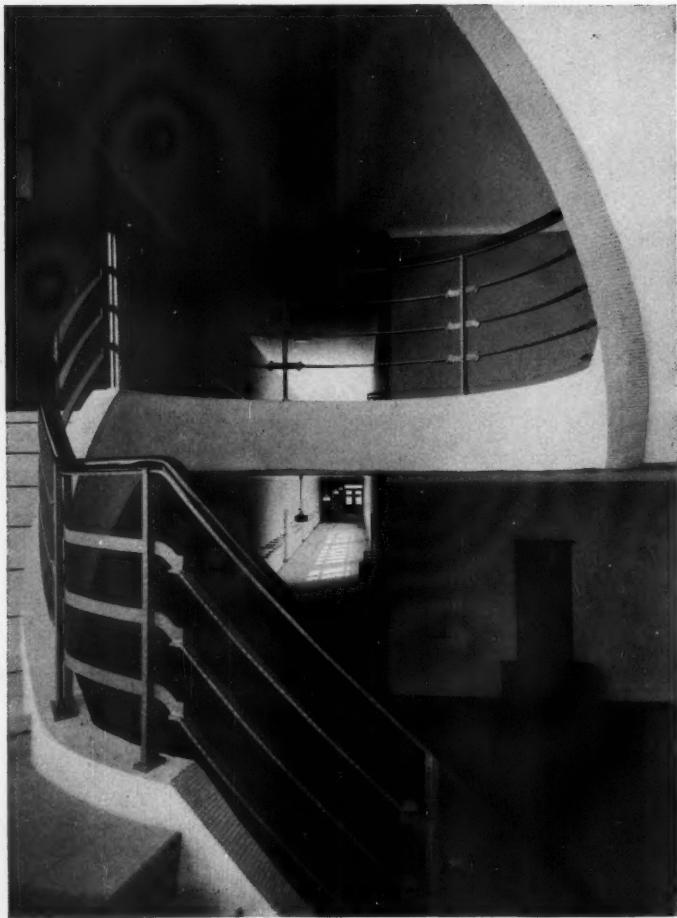
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17. The corkscrew staircase in the tropical winter garden of the "Traube" Café and Restaurant, Berlin. *Architect: Leo Nachtlicht.* 18. The outside staircase to the judge's box of the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, Burnham-on-Crouch. *Architect: Joseph Emberton. Craftsmen: E. and C. Davis.* 19. A canopied outside spiral staircase connecting two floors of the Permanent Exhibition Buildings, at Brünn, Czechoslovakia. *Architect: Bohuslav Fuchs.* 20. The circular staircase at the Marienthalerstrasse Elementary School, Hamburg. *Architect: Fritz Schumacher.*

and straight flights are abhorrent, so that in quite small French houses the staircase is always a thing of beauty. Most of the small French stairs return once on themselves, each step being staggered, so that while the plan is rectangular, the walking line is on an ellipse, the hand-rail assuming a graceful curve of uniform ascent. The setting out entailed is a considerable problem in geometry, and the work entailed in handrailing requires great skill. It is probable that constant practice leads to facility in rule of thumb methods, and the writer has often wondered why this safe and economical form (so far as space is concerned) has not been adopted in England for small houses of the more expensive kind.

Winders are condemned too easily. If the staircase is designed with a just width, and the walking line is preserved, the inclusion of three winders in a right angle turn, either at the foot of the stairs or immediately before a landing, is neither dangerous nor awkward, and the saving of space so gained may make all the difference both to plan and fenestration. A semi-circle of winders is less satisfactory, because it implies the omission of a landing; but for short staircases which connect floors of reasonable height its inclusion may be justified, particularly if the turn is made round a curved open string, and not round a newel. Before leaving winders mention may be made of a type of staircase which is often found in America in "Colonial" domestic work; this consists of an elliptical flight of uniform width enclosed in a rectangular hall, and receiving support from the walls at only three tangential points. A feeling of airy lightness results, and by virtue of this quality the crossing of windows is not noticed. This form has been used in modern buildings by architects who follow tradition, and a particularly pleasing elliptical staircase to a house by McKim, Mead, and White appeared in these pages some years ago.

It sometimes happens that separate access to different floors can best be made by means of the double staircase. Textbooks have frequently suggested that double staircases are synonymous with double dealings; but designers of bygone days were happy in regarding their provision merely as a social necessity, and contented themselves in exhibiting, or concealing, in accordance with expediency.

A number of cases in which segregation or congregation may be most readily achieved by two interwoven staircases will suggest themselves. In mixed schools, for instance, the double staircase can be used to provide separation immediately after a common entrance. In hotels, public and service staircases can be conveniently near, and yet invisible from each other, and in stores circulation can often be improved by grouping of related departments towards the staircase which serves them. The device is as old as it is obvious, and it can have been only an apathetic discounting of history which permitted the publication in a sister journal of a long series of letters-to-the-editor concerning the "invention" of a

twin staircase in a certain Oxford Street store.

#### MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

Materials recently introduced have placed at the architect's disposal a wide range from which to choose. Naturally both appearance and construction are related to practical considerations, among which the more important are initial cost and maintenance charges, resistance to fire, and silence in operation.

For stairs subjected to heavy traffic, stone long held pride of place, and in certain applications it is still without competitors. Suitably chosen stone is non-slipping, fire-resisting, and of reasonable sound absorption; but in some localities these advantages are offset by high transport costs. Moreover steps which are cantilevered from a wall and are mutually supporting from below, may fracture dangerously if subjected to sudden

shocks, and the tendency is to rely less and less on this material purely for load bearing purposes.

In good modern practice stone is used only as a facing material, the necessary support being provided either by sub-steps of reinforced concrete cast *in situ*, or by cranked rolled steel joists. Reinforced concrete construction makes possible the use of even the most expensive marbles; for the facings need not be much more than an inch in thickness, and replacement of damaged members is readily accomplished. By this means, too, colour combinations hitherto impossible may be employed with great decorative gain.

Recast concrete, or artificial stone steps are frequently used in place of natural stone; but even with these it is wise to include light reinforcement in order to reduce the risk of breakages in handling, and to give higher shock resistance.

Pressed steel stairs are widely used



21. One of the four main staircases in The Columbushaus, Berlin. Erich Mendelsohn, architect. The walls are light polished Canstatt travertine; the floor is dark brown burr travertine; the windows are obscured glass with clear vertical panels, and the banisters are white bronze.

abroad, and possess many advantages, among which may be mentioned lightness, ease in erection, and the adaptability of standard units to varying conditions. The treads are generally sunk to receive a composition filling suitable for particular requirements, and the risers may be painted, or faced in bronze or other material.

#### SURFACING

In addition to stone there exists a great wealth of materials suitable for facings. Some of these can be applied only to a base such as concrete; but others are equally valuable in giving additional resistance to wear when imposed on wooden stairs. Coloured cement, magnesite compositions, stone chippings, terrazzo, rubber and linoleum, can be called into service, and each has individual characteristics which render it suitable for specific duties.

Those materials which may be classified broadly as polished artificial stones are peculiarly well adapted to public buildings, because the ease with which they may be carried up as dadoes minimizes upkeep costs due to frequent re-decoration of walls. With most of these great care should be exercised in dealing with the effects of expansion, and joints of bronze or other material should be provided at suitable intervals. These joints need not be unsightly, and if formed into patterns may well add interest to the wall surface.

To provide non-slipping treads is not easy with all materials. Rubber, for instance, should not be used where much of moisture is present, and the provision of grooves or sinkings in some artificial stones is not an adequate safeguard. Where appearance is not of primary importance grooves containing steel, lead, carborundum, alundum, or hard wood may be used; but in important staircases it is better to incorporate an abrasive in the material from which the steps are made. Several firms market non-slip tiles in a wide range of colours, and these contain an abrasive of great hardness which gives safety of tread during the life of the tile. Similar products are available for surface rendering *in situ*.

#### METAL WORK

The production of a large range of alloys, and the perfecting of new processes in electro-plating has resulted in an increased use of metal for hand-rails, balusters, and railings. It is now possible to carry out schemes in metal

which, although high in first cost, entail no further expenditure in upkeep or cleaning. Stainless steel is a material which tempts most designers; but on account of its extreme hardness it is somewhat intractable, and sections specially rolled are very expensive. Cast stainless steel may be used for supporting members, but machining is prohibitive in cost not only by virtue of the metal's hardness, but also on account of the prevalence of internal cavities. Chromium-plating on baster metals provides a durable finish, and so long as members are not unduly large it is not expensive. Chromium-plated tubes are available in most of the diameters which are standard for steel, and suitable brackets and terminal members may be obtained for handrail work. For external stairs painted iron or steel is probably the most suitable material for rails; these should be galvanized before fixing, or if possible zinc sprayed after assembly. With both galvanized and plated work it is imperative to give great care to the joints, as exposure to atmospheric moisture of two dissimilar metals will result in very rapid deterioration owing to electrolytic action. For the same reason screws used to assemble weather resisting metals should be of the same metal from which the frame is made.

#### WINDOWS

Various factors have brought about the prevalence of the long vertical window either flush with wall surfaces or projecting as a bay. Such windows, if they are not interrupted by wall panels are independent of regulations governing wall thicknesses. Metal windows, both "Standard" and purpose made have been very largely used in this manner. In America these windows are frequently made from copper or aluminium, the spandrels being built up from rolled or

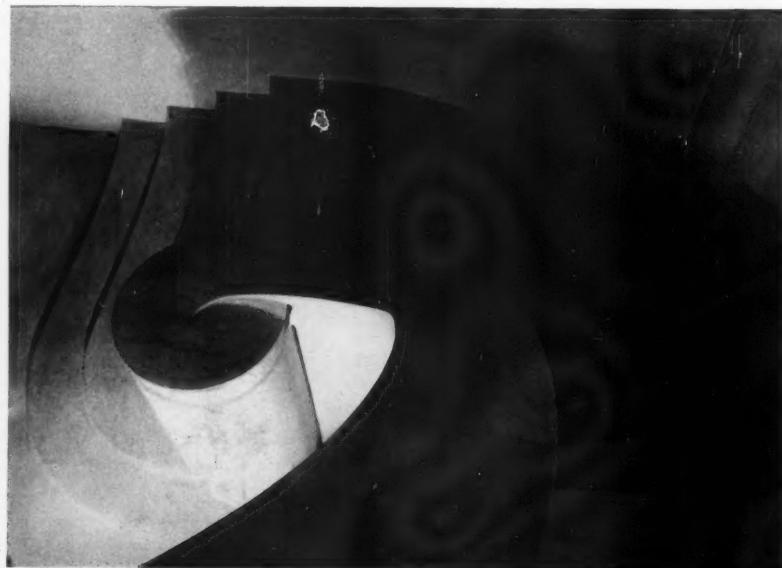
extended sections which are sold in infinite variety.

On the Continent, particularly in Italy, Germany and Holland, constructions of reinforced concrete and glass have become very common, and these forms are being gradually introduced into England. Such windows are a logical development of the pavement, and stall-board light. The specially shaped lenses are carried by reinforced concrete frames, and they can be designed to conceal the concrete almost completely. In some cases the glass is made flush with the concrete outside, which greatly facilitates cleaning. The frames may be hidden internally by means of cast glass plates secured in rectangles to the frames. This construction gives a measure of sound-proofing, and patterns cast on the plates make it possible to obscure the view without cutting off light or impairing the appearance.

#### LIGHTING

Great ingenuity has been displayed by architects in taking advantage of the opportunity which is offered by the decorative lighting of modern staircases. In narrow internal stairs lighting from panels let into the walls or ceilings is probably the most satisfactory and economical method, though where high running costs are not a major consideration, indirect lighting from cornice level gives a richness of effect which can be obtained in no other way.

Staircases which show externally a large glass area, may have floodlights either inside or outside, and in some instances will form an advertisement for the activities which the building houses. Projecting bays are particularly striking when thus treated, and with skilful application the light can provide internal illumination without glare. Formal staircases may demand point lights of a more conventional kind; but if these are used it is worth while to consider the inclusion of scientifically designed reflectors to secure even diffusion, and the same applies to illumination from behind walls or ceilings which are wholly covered in glass. For certain buildings, notably those devoted to the architecture of entertainment, it is necessary to make provision for "secondary" lighting. This should be designed to be as unobtrusive as possible, and its naturalness in operation can be a great factor in avoiding panic in the event of a breakdown in the main system.



22. Looking down the circular staircase of a house at North Foreland, Kent. The centre pier is cased in stainless steel strips, and surmounted by an electric fitting of radiating glass leaves.  
Architect : Oliver Hill.



*A Printer's Ornament, still in use, from the type foundry of R. H. Stevens & Co., Ltd., 89 Southwark St., S.E.1.*

## ANTHOLOGY THE UPHOLSTERER

"The first architectural upholsterer of the age, as he styled himself, and was universally admitted to be by the world of fashion, then, with full powers given to him, spoke *en maître* . . . .

"Of the value of a NAME no one could be more sensible than Mr. Soho.

"Your la'ship sees—this is merely a scratch of my pencil—Your la'ship's sensible—just to give you an idea of the shape, the form of the thing—You fill up your angles here with *encoignieres*—round your walls with the *Turkish tent drapery*—a fancy of my own—in apricot cloth, or crimson velvet, suppose, or, *en flute*, in crimson satin draperies, fanned and riched with gold fringes, *en suite*—intermediate spaces, Apollo's heads with gold rays—and here, ma'am, you place four *chancelieres*, with chimeras at the corners, covered with blue silk and silver fringe, elegantly fanciful—with my *STATIRA CANOPY* here—light blue silk draperies—*aerial tint*, with silver balls—and for seats here, the *SERAGLIO OTTOMANS*, superfine scarlet—your paws—griffin—golden—and golden tripods, here, with antique cranes—and oriental alabaster tables here and there—quite appropriate, your la'ship feels—

"And, let me reflect—For the next apartment, it strikes me—as your la'ship don't value expense—the *Alhambra hangings*—my own thought entirely—Now, before I unroll them, Lady Clonbrony, I must beg you'll not mention I've shown them—I give you my sacred honour, not a soul has set eye upon the Alhambra hangings, except Mrs. Dareville, who stole a peep—I refused, absolutely refused, the Duchess of Torcaster—But I can't refuse your la'ship—So see, ma'am—(unrolling them)—scagliola porphyry columns supporting the grand dome—entablature, silvered and decorated with imitation bronze ornaments—under the entablature, a *valance in pelments*, of puffed scarlet silk, would have an unparalleled effect, seen through the arches—with the *TREBISOND TRELLICE PAPER*, would make a *tout ensemble*, novel beyond example—On that Trebisond trellice paper, I confess, ladies, I do pique myself—

"Then for the little room, I recommend turning it temporarily into a Chinese pagoda with this *Chinese pagoda paper*, with the *porcelain border*, and josses, and jars, and beakers, to match; and I can venture to promise one vase of pre-eminent size and beauty—O, indubitably! if your la'ship prefers it, you can have the *Egyptian hieroglyphic paper*, with the *ibis border*, to match!—The only objection is, one sees it everywhere—quite antediluvian—gone to the hotels even—But, to be sure, if your la'ship has a fancy—At all events, I humbly recommend, what his Grace of Torcaster longs to patronise, my *Moon CURTAINS*, with candlelight draperies—A demisaison elegance this—I hit off yesterday—and—True, your la'ship's quite correct—out of the common, completely—And, of course, you'd have the *sphynx candelabras*, and the *Phoenix argands*—O! nothing else lights now, ma'am—Expense!—Expense of the whole!—Impossible to calculate here on the spot!—But nothing at all worth your ladyship's consideration!—"

Maria Edgeworth

*The Absentee, 1812*

## MARGINALIA

### SHOULD THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH

aesthetic questions connected with churches? Archdeacon Howson, in the *Guiseley Parish Register*, says "the churches and chapels erected in the early nineteenth century were all dreadfully drab." The Archdeacon, like most clergymen, has a rooted objection to galleries and box pews—symbols of a sturdy departing Protestantism, and his predilection is obviously in favour of the refeened unstained oak Gothic which is wrecking the interiors of churches all over the country. The old days of the Communion Table which can still be made consonant with a High Church service are, alas! over; box-pews are always called unsightly and galleries "cumbrous"; "the English Altar," that incomplete four-poster, has found its way into many churches, and lovely communion tables are hidden by frontals or shoved away into vestries. Galleries are taken down and the proportions of churches which were designed for them ruined; altar-pieces—as at St. Paul's, Covent Garden—are covered with uninteresting hangings or bits of majolica—and all in the name of "art."

### "ART"

"Art" has bitten the Church of England, badly. It is curious, too, to notice how Anglo-Catholic churches are nearly always the worst offenders. There is a special blue hanging which is becoming as prevalent as was once the red baize stamped with *feuilles-de-lys*.

### A BLACK RECORD

Look at the crimes committed in the last few years. Nineteen City churches were doomed and only saved by loud public protest. Nevertheless

ST. ALPHAGE, LONDON WALL, London (Classical 1777), had the only interesting part of it—a good, simple eighteenth-century interior, removed and an over-restored tower preserved because it was Gothic.

ST. KATHERINE COLEMAN, the only completely unspoiled City church in London, was demolished altogether because it was modern (1741 classical). It contained box-pews, marble floor, fine organ, pulpit communion rails and galleries.

EXETER has threatened the church in Bedford Circus (classical) and an eighteenth-century church near Queen Street.

LINCOLN is removing its one classical church.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY is going to have its character ruined by the removal of its monuments. The Dean does not seem to realize that the Abbey denuded of these memorials is going to look little different from any other great church in the country. The memorials do not detract from the architectural effect of the Abbey, and they are, most of them, in themselves,

objects of interest and beauty, albeit not in a style at present in favour with the Church of England.

And while this sort of thing is being done in major instances, who knows what havoc is being wrought in other churches?

Would it not be better, if the Church of England has such a deep objection to classical places of worship, often designed more as meeting-houses than as Catholic places of worship, to effect an exchange of conventicles with Nonconformists? The Church of England fittings, so popular in their Gothic "artness" nowadays, would look very well in some of the more daring efforts in Early English or Art-Nouveau-Perpendicular which Nonconformity has perpetrated in London and the provinces, while the Nonconformist service is admirably suited to a galleried and box-pew church.

\* \* \*

#### 40 YEARS AGO

Readers of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW will be interested by C. R. Ashbee's article on "Forty Years of British Architecture" in the splendid special number with which *The Studio* is celebrating its fortieth birthday. He writes definitely from the standpoint of the contemporary architect, although he was born in 1863, and he condemns, only with the politeness of his generation, the "Piranesi effects" of much be-knighted architecture.

\* \* \*

#### NO MORE MODERN ART

While it is interesting to learn that the Nazis have put an end to all filthy modernism in Germany and have come out definitely in favour of pre-war Imperial classical, it is also encouraging to know that their action will find appreciation in England. *The British Lion*, a monthly magazine of the United Patriotic Societies in Great Britain, reviews "a brochure all true lovers of art should read [Painting Gone Mad. Pitman, 1s.], as exposing the hideous cult of distortion and perversion applied under the name of various so-called schools of modernists . . . modern 'art' which, like the cult of ugliness and distortion, has a distinct affinity with the moral and political decadencies and degenerations characteristic of this epoch."

\* \* \*

#### A NEW CHARM IN THE ELEVATION

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*From an Auctioneer's Prospectus.*

\* \* \*

#### PLANNING WITHOUT TEARS

Three useful memoranda have been published by the Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

*The Town and Country Planning Act, 1932.*  
A Consideration of its principles by Sir Leslie Scott (free of charge) will save



Guildford Cathedral, by Edward Maufe. A woodcut by John Farleigh

people the trouble of wading through the Stationery Office publication of the Act, while *Town and Country Planning. To Plan—or Not to Plan?* (1s.) corroborates the first pamphlet with telling illustrations.

A third pamphlet, *The Protection of Wild Flowers* (1s. 6d. per dozen), approaches this subject from a new angle. Instead of reiterating the notice boards "Do not pick the flowers," it gives reasons why they should not be picked.

These pamphlets may be had from the Secretary, C.P.R.E., 17, Great Marlborough Street, London, W.1.

\* \* \*

#### QUOTATION

"A prominent American business man recently put the ideas we are suggesting here into a phrase that is capable of considerable enrichment in its interpretation. He was discussing the paradox of over-production. He said that while this current system, the profit-promotive system, our so-called capitalist system, had been able to evolve the most efficient mass production, it had still to solve the secret of 'mass consumption.' In itself the phrase has scarcely more in it than 'rationalization' when it was used by the late Lord Melchett as a counter catchword to nationalization, but if we confer upon it the cognate idea of the 'community-buying' of peace-time material as well as of war material, we find it at once germinating in a very suggestive and profitable manner. We shall see later how the community-buying of armaments was forced up during the last half-century by armament salesmanship, and there is no apparent reason why a similar procedure on a larger scale on the part of architectural and transport salesmen should not presently come to the relief of the present paradoxical deadlock in economic life. The cathedral building of the Middle Ages was, as we have noted, a form of community-buying. Not only the remaking of roads (already going on in Great Britain, for example) and the comprehensive replanning of the entire transport system, but the deliberate rebuilding of entire towns with modernized

sanitation and public services, the continual modernization of our rationalized industrial plant and the entire reconstruction of the layout of the countryside for production, health and pleasure, may be made collective communal enterprises. If we can build magnificent jails and asylums out of our common resources, why should we not build great housing quarters for common people, to prevent their becoming recalcitrant and criminal? If punitive comfort, why not preventive comfort?"

*From THE WEALTH, WORK AND HAPPINESS OF MANKIND, by H. G. Wells.*

\* \* \*

#### THE ADVENTURE OF BUILDING

A new edition has just been published of *The Adventure of Building*. A few minor revisions have been made in the text, but the chief difference from the old edition lies in the illustrations which are now all of cheaper houses costing about £1,000. Should the message of this sixpenny pamphlet, published by The Architectural Press, sink in, and people about to build a house realize that it is, in the end, cheaper to employ an architect and more public-spirited and convenient to employ local materials where possible, and local styles, then much will have been done to rescue England from the jerry-builder. The fact that this new edition brings the number of copies printed up to 51,000 should be evidence enough that England is regaining an architectural conscience.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

SIR,—I am engaged upon a biography of John Nash (1752-1835), the architect, and should be very glad to hear of any letters or drawings connected with Nash, now in private hands. If any of your readers would inform me of the whereabouts of documents of this nature I should be extremely grateful.

Your obedient servant,

JOHN SUMMERSON.

14, Hampstead Hill Gardens,  
N.W.3.

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
SERIAL

# WHAT A LIFE!

## An Autobiography

By E.V.L and G.M.

Through the kind permission of Messrs. E. V. Lucas and George Morrow and Methuen & Co., it has been possible to reprint their book called "What a Life!" which appeared in 1911.

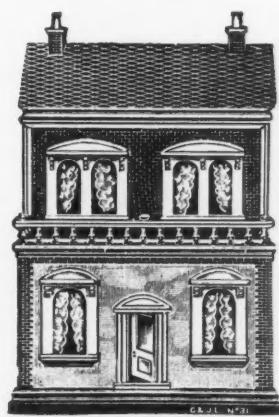
The story, apart from its great narrative appeal, should be of interest to all students of architectural history. The illustrations are taken from Messrs. Whiteley's General Catalogue of 1910 and thanks are due to Messrs. Whiteley for their added permission to make this reprint. The authors say in their preface: "One man searching the pages of Whiteley's General Catalogue will find only facts and prices; another will find what we think we have found—a deeply-moving human drama."

ILLUSTRATED BY WHITELEY'S  
1911

### CHAPTER I CHILDHOOD

I was born very near the end of the year.

The grange where I was born was situated in a secluded corner of the



Chiltern Hills.  
Rumour had it that Queen Elizabeth had slept there.

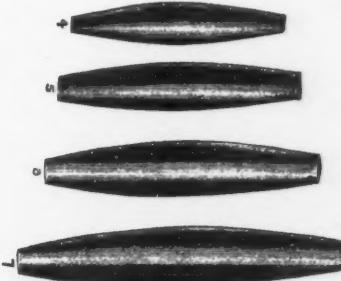


✓

My father was the soul of hospitality



and kept cigars to suit all tastes.



Never a very strong man



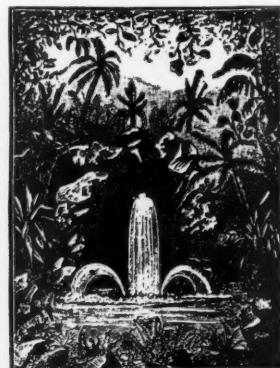
## MARGINALIA

he was perforce a great traveller, and my sweet mother loved to follow his wanderings on the quaint old globe in the library.

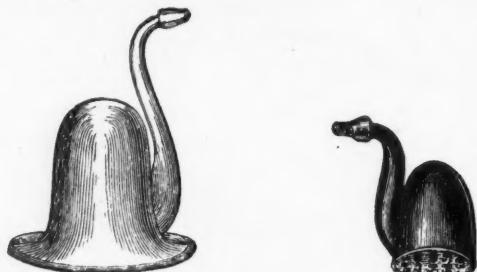


The Architectural Review, May 1933.

Our house had superb grounds, and the garden was a scene of savage grandeur.



Two swans—one English and one Australian—were always on the lake.



*(to be continued)*

---

## AN IMPORTANT SITE IN NORTH LONDON (HIGHBURY N.L. STATION)



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# Staircase Materials and Finishes

By A. G. Shoosmith

THE different methods of staircase construction are so generally known that it is proposed to devote these notes to an examination of the materials of which they are constructed, and to the finishings commonly applied to them, considering particularly their durability, ease of repair, non-slipping properties, cleanliness and quietness.

## STONE

By the advance in concrete construction, and the development of granolithic and similar finishings used with concrete, stone has been much displaced as an indoor stair material. Its durability varies considerably in almost any single variety, and the construction of a stone stair makes it practically impossible to replace worn or broken steps. Stone stairs built around open wells have been known to collapse.

Yorkshire sandstones are most commonly used, though Blue Pennant is used in the West of England.

## CAST STONE

This is a concrete of which the aggregate is natural stone or sand of a similar colour. Steps can be pre-cast to any reasonable section; they are cheaper than natural stone and have the additional advantage that a sprinkling of carborundum or other abrasive can render their surface more durable and less slippery. Alternatively they can be cast inlaid with tesserae of a non-slip nature.

## MARBLE

The durability of marble varies almost as widely as its colour, and many varieties are unsuitable for stairs. White Carrara marble (usually mis-named Sicilian in this country), is a favourite on both accounts.

Marble stairs are suitable only for leisure traffic, and should never be polished. They are liable to be slippery at all times, and when wet they are dangerous.

## TRAVERTINE

This is a tufa stone very similar to a coarse marble. It is not slippery, and has been used with excellent effect in important office buildings where traffic is hard and hurried.

## TILES

Tiles if properly fixed form a thoroughly strong stair, and individual tiles can be replaced if necessary. It is important to choose a variety which is durable and proof against slipping. Prominent among such are those made with an admixture of alundum or carborundum.

## MOSAIC

Mosaic can be used on stair-treads as an infilling behind a nosing of some other material. Marble tesserae are slippery, and when used should be set with wide joints containing a suitable abrasive. Manufactured tesserae containing a silicious or other abrasive ingredient are to be preferred. They can be of burnt clay with an alundum or carborundum admixture.

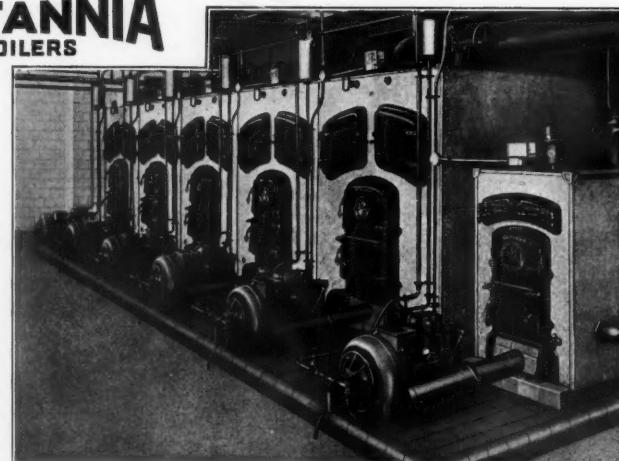
## TERRAZZO

Terrazzo finish is laid about an inch thick on a concrete bed which has been washed free of loose sand and dust, and thoroughly soaked, all surplus water being removed. It consists of an aggregate (usually of marble chips) passed through a  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. screen, or smaller if desired, combined with cement; in some cases the chips are sprinkled over,

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Petrumite is made in exterior and interior qualities and it is often used for texture work for the interior decoration of cinemas, theatres and other public buildings. Many striking effects may be obtained by shading with Flat Oil Paint or Metallic Paints.

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and pressed into, a layer of plastic mortar of cement and sand previously spread on the base. After ten days, during which interval it must be kept wet, the surface is rubbed smooth with a stone or surfacing machine. Good effects can be obtained by the use of coloured marbles with white cement. It is important to sprinkle treads with alundum or carborundum, choosing the abrasive with regard for the marble used. Alundum is white or light brown; carborundum is black.

#### GRANOLITHIC

This is a compound of cement and an aggregate of granite chips passed through a  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. screen. It can be laid immediately on freshly poured concrete, but as this exposes it to damage it is more usually laid at a later stage of the work. The base concrete, after being well washed and soaked, is spread with a cement grout. The granolithic compound is laid on it before the grout sets, screeded, floated with cement, and finally trowelled with steel trowels. It is recommended that the total thickness be not less than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Owing to the hardness of granolithic, steps can be finished with moulded nosings. In finishing it is advisable to sprinkle the surface with an abrasive.

#### MAGNESITE

This material, commonly used for floors, can also be employed on stairs. The compound usually consists of a dry mix of magnesium oxide and sawdust or

wood flour moistened, preferably only to a thick paste, with magnesium chloride; it is spread, tamped down, and finished off with a trowel.

The sawdust or wood flour produces a warm, resilient and fairly noiseless surface. Sometimes asbestos is added to increase toughness.

Magnesite composition can be laid on stone, concrete or wood, but in the last case precautions must be taken against cracking. Magnesite surfaces must not be washed with soda or strong soap, but should be brushed or rubbed with steel wool or shavings. Polish diluted with turpentine may be used.

The ordinary magnesite compound as described above is liable to become dry and dusty unless periodically treated with oil, but this disadvantage can be obviated by the use of the recently introduced method patented under the name of the "Derma" process, which consists in the addition of an asphalt emulsion to the mixture. This ingredient provides a permanent oil supply and reduces the likelihood of cracking to a minimum.

Lime free pigments can be added to the magnesite compound. Slipping can be prevented by the insertion of carborundum lines.

#### FERODO FIBRE

This provides an efficient, hard-wearing, non-slipping, noiseless finish of good appearance. It can be used in narrow brake-lining widths, set in shallow metal channels, screwed two or more to a

FIG. 1

FIG. 2

FIG. 3

tread; as a nosing to tread-coverings of other materials; or in larger widths backed with metal and curved round the nosing (figs. 1, 2, 3).

Cleaning with a stiff brush is usual.

#### RUBBER

Rubber is an excellent stair-covering material, and can be used on wood, concrete, or any other surface. It is silent, and its resistance to wear is astonishing. Though inclined to be slippery if very wet or muddy, it is easily kept clean, and when clean is in a high degree slip-proof. A very wide range of colours is obtainable, both plain and mottled, and any design can be made by assembling the shapes in the unvulcanized dough and vulcanizing the whole in one process. Simple designs can be carried out by cutting and fitting

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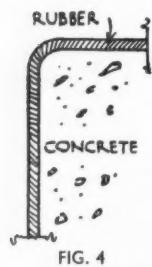


FIG. 4

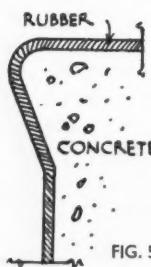


FIG. 5

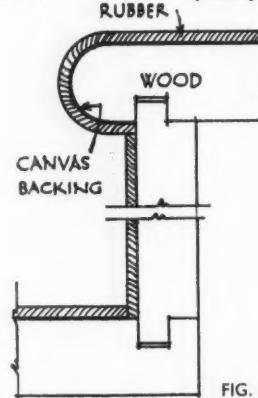


FIG. 6

the pieces *in situ*, but joints so made are likely to be visible and may open and give trouble.

Nosings are vulcanized in various shapes (figs. 4, 5, 6) on canvas backing, and are normally in unit with the tread. For cheapness separate nosings are sometimes used on wooden stairs; these are stuck in position and tacked to the tread

through an extension of their canvas backing, the rubber sheet or other tread-covering being then lapped over the extension to butt against the back of the rubber nosing (fig. 7).

Rubber tiles are not very useful for stair-treads, but can be used on landings. To ensure the perfect adhesion of rubber covering, the stair must be clean and dry. A smooth surface is essential. Casein cement is often used as an adhesive; it forms a mechanical joint with a cement screed, but usually rots after a few years in such contact. Moreover, it is inadvisable to

advisable to use only rubber of the R.G.A. standard adopted by the leading manufacturers in this country, and a list of these manufacturers can be obtained from the Rubber Growers' Association.

#### CORK

Cork is another admirable stair-covering; soft, warm, silent, non-slipping, and clean, it has been found under an abrasion test to offer a resistance considerably greater than that of oak. It can be superimposed on the tread, with a nosing of hard-wood, ferodo, or rubber; or sunk in panels in both treads and risers. The cork tiles are made in various sizes from pure natural cork, which is granulated or flaked and compressed under heat, the natural resin thus liberated forming an efficient binding material. They should be fixed with a self-hardening, cold, bituminous glue. Casein, though sometimes used, is not satisfactory.

Cork floors are usually wax-polished, but this treatment, which makes them somewhat slippery, is not recommended for stairs. Instead a special impregnating varnish can be applied as an original treatment, the surface being subsequently kept washed.

#### LINOLEUM

This has long been a popular stair-covering material, and consists of a mixture of cork-dust, pigment, and oil, pressed on to a canvas backing under heat. It can be glued to concrete or wood, but

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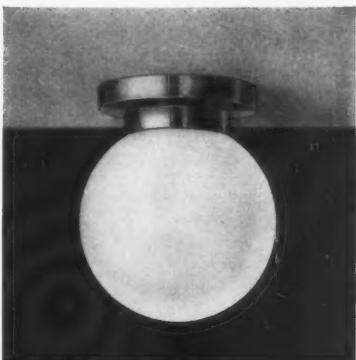
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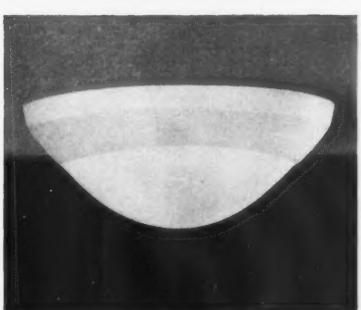
opal glass



30567/30284

30567	60 watt	6 in.	10/6
30284	60 watt	7½ in.	13/6

opal glass



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a smooth base is necessary to ensure even wear. Wax polish acts as a preservative to linoleum. Soap and strong soda destroy its surface and colour.

#### METAL NOSINGS

Nosings of fluted brass and other metals are commonly used with linoleum and similar stair-coverings. Such nosings, even if the edges do not lift and ensnare the feet (as usually they do), are apt to wear very smooth in course of time and furnish a danger-point at a critical part of the tread.

#### WOODEN STAIRS

The construction of wooden stairs need not be described in these notes. It is, however, thought desirable to add a warning that such coverings as rubber, cork and linoleum are air-tight, and that it is advisable, where they are used, to provide some ventilation to the underside of the stair, otherwise dry-rot may result.

#### PRESSED STEEL STAIRS

This form of stair is being increasingly used. Tread and riser are usually pressed in a single unit, and it has been suggested to the writer that in the near future entire flights of standard heights are likely to be made in a single pressing. These stairs are cheap, strong, and rigid. The units are bolted to steel strings as the framework of the building is erected, and the stairs can be used for purposes of the work.

A variety of treads—wood, granolithic, slate, etc.—can easily be fixed.

#### FERALUN, ETC.

The trade names, Feralun, Bronzalun, Alumalun, Nicalun, are given by their manufacturers to a range of metal treads having a non-slip surface of hard electric furnace grit cast in various base-metals, viz., iron and alloys of bronze, aluminium and nickel. The base metal determines the colour of the finished article. These treads are useful for very heavy wear, and can be screwed to wood or to special hold-fasts in stone or concrete. They are, therefore, particularly valuable for repairing badly worn stairs, and can be either recessed or superimposed. Feralun can also be used in the form of structural treads in all-iron stairs, either with or without risers.

#### METAL WORK

Many metals are suitable for stair railings, and the traditional ones are well known. Various beautiful alloys, such as Birmabright, Silveroid and Monel metal, are now on the market, which are both strong and malleable.

#### PARAPETS

The vogue of the parapet in lieu of the balustrade is increasing. It is dignified, but its bulk and obstruction of light disqualify it in some circumstances. The parapet can be of marble or stone to

match the stair; of concrete or brick and hard plaster; or framed and covered with panelling, plywood or one of the numerous wall-boards. A handrail of metal or wood usually surmounts it.

#### Notes and Announcements

*The Architectural Press* announce the issue of a revised catalogue of the books they have published on architecture and the fine arts, on design, English and foreign, on decoration and furnishing, old and new, on archaeology and topography; also technical books and periodicals on the science of building construction and on the practice of architecture; portfolios of measured drawings of buildings, mouldings, ironwork, brickwork, and many other subjects. A copy of the catalogue will be sent post free on application to *The Architectural Press*, 9, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.1.

\* \* \*

The British Aluminium Co., Ltd., Adelaide House, King William Street, London, E.C.4, have removed from their Birmingham office and warehouse at 21, Barwick Street, to Lawley and Landor Streets. The new telephone number is Aston Cross 5865-6.

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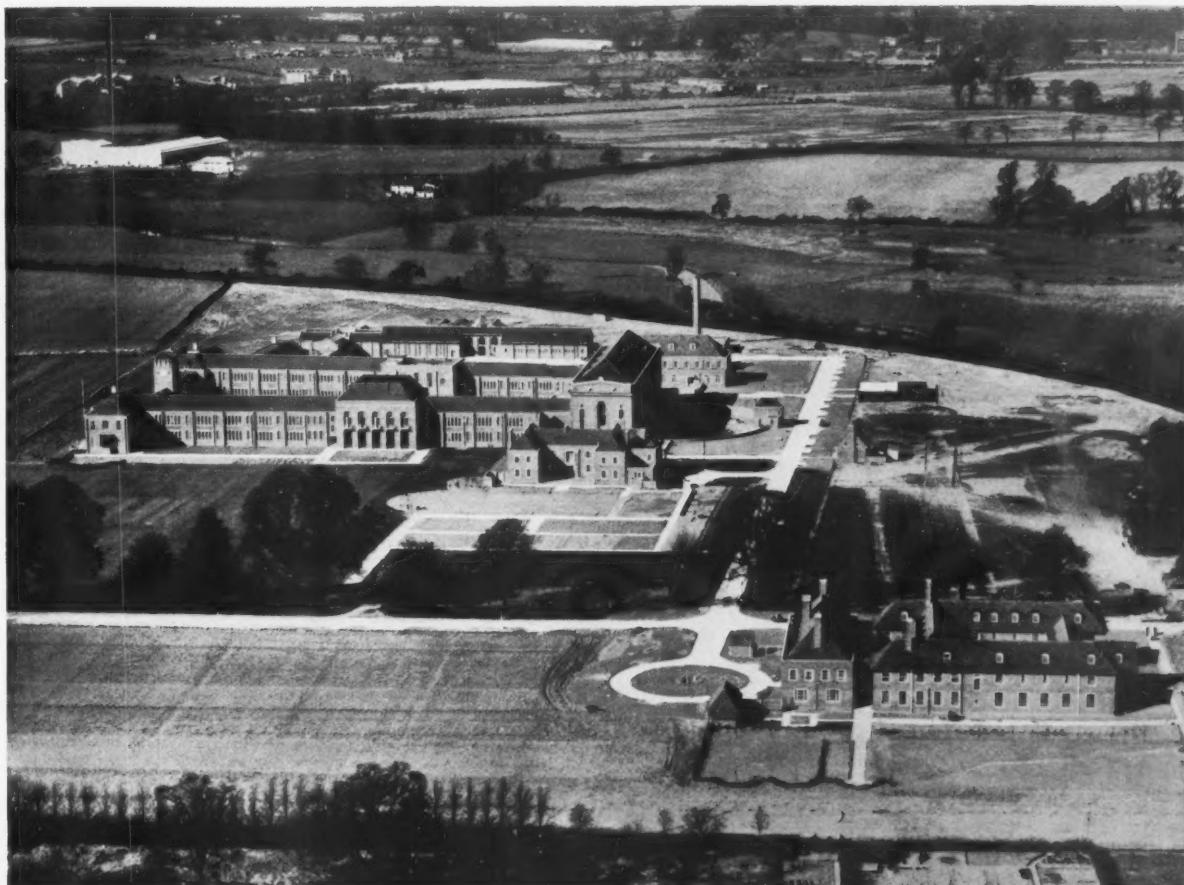
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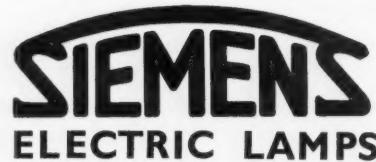
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